

**The Role of Institutions in Responding to the Syrian
Refugees Crisis in Lebanon:
The Humanitarian Aid Framework of Saida**

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Thesis By Ola El Hariri
Advisor: Clara Irazabal

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Executive Summary

As of September 2014, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) estimated that millions of Syrian refugees have been displaced from their homes due to the ongoing Syrian civil war. Since the beginning of the uprising against the Syrian government in March 2011, Lebanon has become host to almost 1.2 million Syrian refugees. The lack of Lebanese policy, legislation and action toward managing their increasing influx has led to arbitrary and dispersed settlements in over 1730 different localities in Lebanon, residing mainly in lower income communities. The Syrian refugee crisis in Lebanon is entangled in a complex and continually shifting array of issues spanning from the humanitarian, socio-economic, political, and security circumstances of the Syrian refugees, to their impact on Lebanon's economy, social fabric, political stability, and national security. With the absence of a robust response by the Lebanese government to the crisis, this study focuses on the role of local, international, governmental, and non-governmental institutions in confronting the refugee influx, and managing the impact of their introduction to the Lebanese milieu.

In my research approach, I begin with a brief overview of Lebanon's past and present engagements with refugees in general, entailing a description of Lebanese society's historical relationship with its Palestinian refugees. This section will also briefly cover the intricate history of the greater Lebanese and Syrian relationship, a crucial step toward grasping the full impact of the Syrian crisis and its refugee inflows upon the sociopolitical stability of Lebanon.

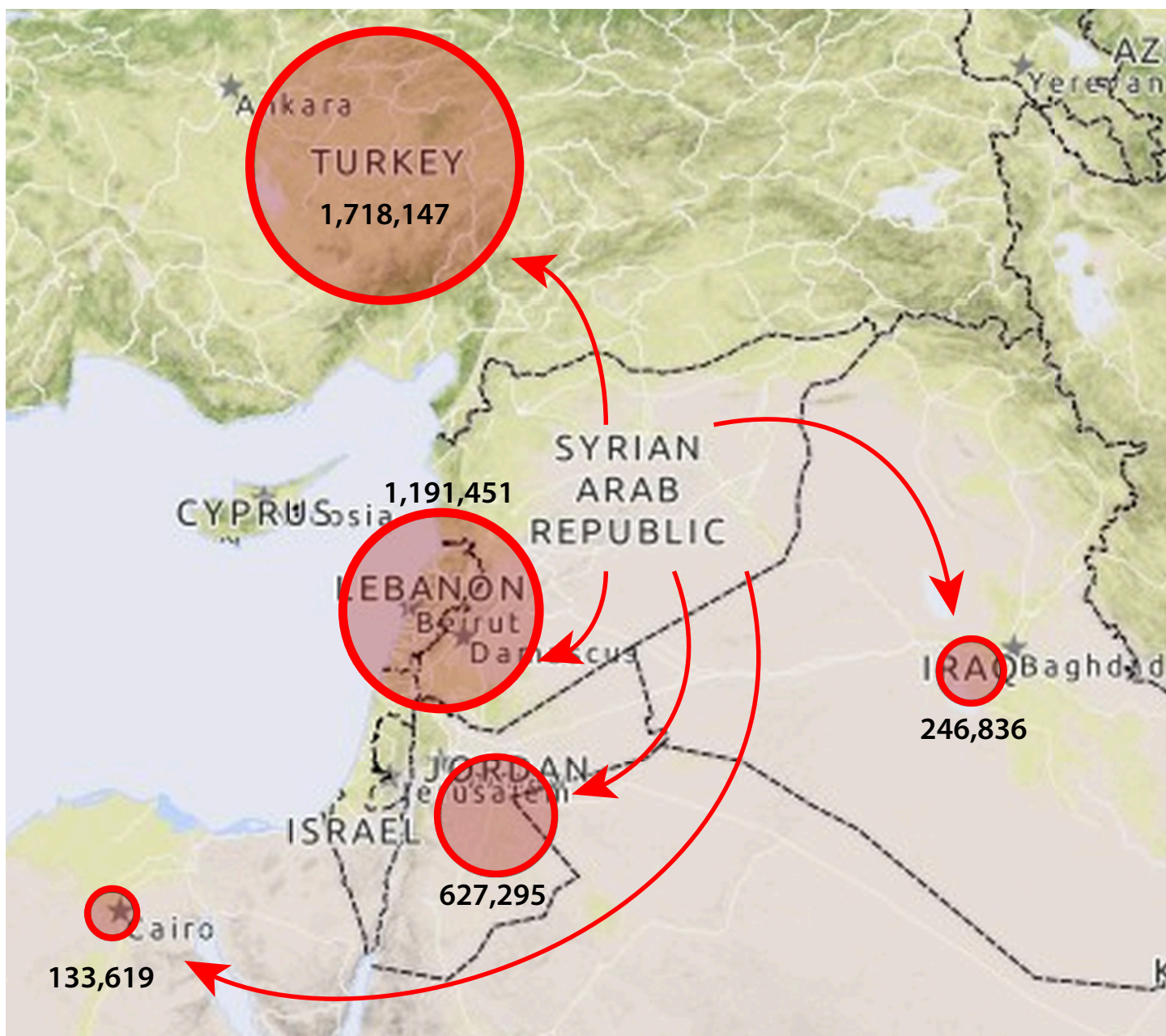
As a case study, this thesis considers the aid framework of the city of Saida, located in the South of Lebanon. Saida's framework represents a flexible, high-engagement modality for localized management of refugee inflows, featuring a coalition of local Islamic NGOs in close collaboration with the municipality. International organizations such as the UNHCR are also heavily involved in Saida's relief management. This case study describes the varying activity and impact of the principal actors of Saida's operating environment, and highlights the distinct roles of Western and Islamic aid organizations.

Building upon phenomena revealed in the case study, this thesis presents an analytical framework delineating the principal variables affecting Saida's operating environment. These variables are Legislation, Economy, Public Services, Housing, General Security, Policing, Social Capital, and Transnational Aid. Each variable contains a particular set of dimensions, whose clear layout helps to illuminate interrelations between variables, as well as the challenges facing aid practitioners in Lebanon. This analytical framework further emphasizes the importance of the Transnational Aid variable to the stability and progress of the Syrian refugee circumstance, inspiring further investigation into current transnational aid modalities. The Humanitarian Aid Models section presents and analyzes the structure, operations, financing, political interests, and ideologies of the two main humanitarian models involved in the refugee crisis in Saida: the Secular Western Aid Model, and the Faith-Based Islamic Aid Model.

Empowered by the Operating Environment Variables framework and the Humanitarian Aid Models analysis, this study makes dimension-level recommendations to the principal actors impacting Saida's operating environment. Yet this thesis goes beyond merely offering recommendations for the stability and advancement of the current aid paradigm, which is centered on providing refugees with basic amenities and rights. This study elucidates the possibility of a positive-sum refugee management paradigm, predicated upon the idea that a well-managed integration of Syrian refugees potentiates a cosmopolitan socioeconomic environment. Through education, training, microfinance schemes, and other economic encouragements, Syrian refugees could be integrated into dynamic economic frameworks on the local and national level. This paradigm redefines 'social justice' as the appreciation and liberalization of the human capacity for innovation and discourse, arguing that Syrian refugees – and certainly others – stand to contribute significantly to the socioeconomic capital of host communities. Moreover, cross-cultural discourse could broaden eclecticism and generate unique synergies, enhancing the general quality of life in host environments.

1. Introduction

As of September 2014, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) estimated that close to 9.5 million Syrian refugees have been displaced from their homes due to the ongoing Syrian civil war. According to their data, 6.5 million Syrians are internally displaced, while another three million have sought refuge in neighboring countries (UNHCR 2014). Since the beginning of the uprising against the Syrian government in March 2011, Lebanon has become host to almost 40% of those refugees, some 1.2 million people (UNHCR 2014). This number is estimated to have accounted for 30% of Lebanon's total population in 2014. The lack of Lebanese policy addressing the increasing refugee influx has led to arbitrary and dispersed settlements (SFCG 2014). Syrian refugees have settled in over 1730 different localities in Lebanon, mainly residing in lower income communities (SFCG 2014). The Syrian refugee crisis in Lebanon is entangled in a complex and continually shifting array of issues spanning from the humanitarian, socio-economic, political, and security circumstances of the Syrian refugees, to their impact on Lebanon's economy, social and urban fabrics, political stability, and national security.



Map 1 - Regional Map Showing Flow of Externally Displaced Syrian Refugees

Source: <http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/regional.php>

Lebanon is not party to the 1951 Refugee Convention, which was adopted by the League of Nations at a diplomatic conference in Geneva (UNHCR 2014). This set of guidelines, laws, and articles aims to ensure the equitable treatment of refugees and the protection of their human rights. The Convention defines the refugee as someone who, "owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality, and is unable to, or owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country" (UNHCR 2010, 14). In addition, the convention identifies refugees' rights and obligations from and toward their host countries. Underneath the Convention, refugee rights include the right to nondiscriminatory legal protection; to access the host state's judicial courts; to protection from expulsion; to freedom of religion; to assistance and social services; to work; to shelter; to education; to freedom of movement; to the right to be issued travel documents; and their obligation to respect the host country's laws and security environment (UNHCR 2010). The most essential and valued clause in the agreement is the non-refoulement principle, which ensures that refugees are not denied border entry.

Although Lebanon is not bound by the Refugee Convention and its non-refoulement provisions, Syrian nationals were allowed unrestricted entry into Lebanese borders, a short-lived policy based upon a 1993 Syrian-Lebanese agreement for economic and social cooperation (Lebanese Ministry of Economy and Trade and Syrian Ministry of Economy and Foreign Trade 2003). On December 31st 2014, in defiance of that agreement, the Lebanese government imposed border entry restrictions on Syrians. It introduced six strict visa categories resembling those applied to foreign nationals (Naylor and Haidamous 2014). These categories include a business or work visa (requiring a Lebanese sponsor and up to 1000 USD fees), a tourist visa, a student visa, a property owner visa, and a medical visa (Personal Interview January, 2015).

Furthermore, Lebanese law does not define the word "refugee", nor does it afford a separate or preferred legal status to foreigners who have resided in Lebanon for more than three years, a feature of the Refugee Convention (Suleiman 2006, 14). The State thus considers people who enter legally but overstay their visas toward seeking asylum (or those who illegally enter with that same intention) as illegal immigrants subject to legal prosecution, and deportation. The situation changed with the September 2003 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Lebanon's General Security and UNHCR. The MOU asserts that Lebanon is not an "asylum country" and that "the only durable solution for refugees is resettlement in a third country". The MOU thus aims to provide "temporary humanitarian solutions for the problems of people entering and residing unlawfully in Lebanon" (Human Rights Watch 2007, 16).

Lebanon is currently host to a large population of socially, economically, and politically marginalized Palestinian refugees. This experience has intimately affected the political posture, legislation, and social attitudes in Lebanon. In 1948, the Lebanese government (along with other neighboring countries) opened its borders to Palestinian refugees displaced by the 1948 Arab-Israeli War. Today, some 450,000 refugees representing an estimated 10% of the Lebanese population are registered with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) in Lebanon, with about 53% living in 12 official Palestinian refugee camps (UNRWA 2014). Lebanese law classifies Palestinian refugees as a "Special Category of Foreigners," denying them numerous basic rights such as education, healthcare, social security, and pensions (Suleiman 2006). In addition, on April 3rd 2001, Law Number 296 was introduced, denying (specifically) Palestinian refugees legal rights to own or inherit property in Lebanon. Lebanese law also incorporates a number of restrictions to Palestinian refugees' right to employment, requiring them to obtain a work permit (except for jobs in agriculture, husbandry and construction), and prohibiting them from practicing up to 20 different fields of work in Lebanon, including medicine, engineering, trade, and business (UNRWA 2014). Over the course of the past six decades, these factors have contributed to the creation of a socially, economically, and politically marginalized Palestinian community. These conditions correlate to recent increases of religious and political extremism within these communities.

As for Lebanon and Syria, their conflicted relationship predates the current Syrian civil war. Historically, the two nations were part of the Ottoman Empire, sharing the same external borders as Greater Syria. During World War I (in May 1916), France and Britain signed a secret agreement, known as Sykes-Picot, mapping the dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire and guaranteeing the countries' inheritance of strategically desired regions. Following WWI, the League of Nations partitioned Greater Syria under a French Mandate, eventually leading to the creation of the independent nation-states of Lebanon and Syria (History Channel website). Yet the post-colonial borders were the result of France's political, economic, and administrative interests, rather than having any basis in the region's sociopolitical realities. The introduction of modern borders did not erase the pre-colonial political and cultural structures of Syria and Lebanon. Instead, it produced social and political tensions between Lebanese nationalists and Arab Syrian nationalists, one calling for an independent Lebanese state, the other calling for a united Greater Syria (Osman 2013).



Map 2 - Ottoman Greater Syria

Source: http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/5/5a/1851_Henry_Warren_Map_of_Syria.jpg

Contemporary tensions between Syria and Lebanon date back more than three decades. The Syrian military presence in Lebanon began in 1976, a year after the outbreak of the Lebanese civil war (1975-1990). Triumphant over local resistance, the Syrian regime gradually established dominion over Lebanon's weakened political system (SFCG 2014). Certain regions suffered more than others, such as Tripoli, Lebanon's second largest city. In 1980, its residents revolted against Syrian troops but were ultimately overpowered. The Syrian government exacerbated religious sectarianism within the city by empowering minority Alawites over the Muslim Sunni majority, whose representation was suppressed for decades. Today, in Tripoli, memories of the not-so-distant Syrian hegemony are manifested in negative attitudes toward and violent confrontations with the Syrian refugee community.

Syria's overt dominion over Lebanon lasted until the assassination of the former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafic Hariri in February 2005, an event that caused widespread outrage and ended Syria's overt military presence. The Syrian government nevertheless maintains substantial influence over some political parties in Lebanon, and has increased that influence throughout the ongoing crisis (SFCG 2014). The publicly acknowledged military assistance currently provided to the Syrian government by Hizballah is an expression of those persisting relationships (Black and Roberts 2013).

This complex, historically entrenched array of strategic relationships, political clientelism, discriminative legislation, and social prejudice frames the Syrian refugee crisis in Lebanon and characterizes the current operating environment for aid practitioners.

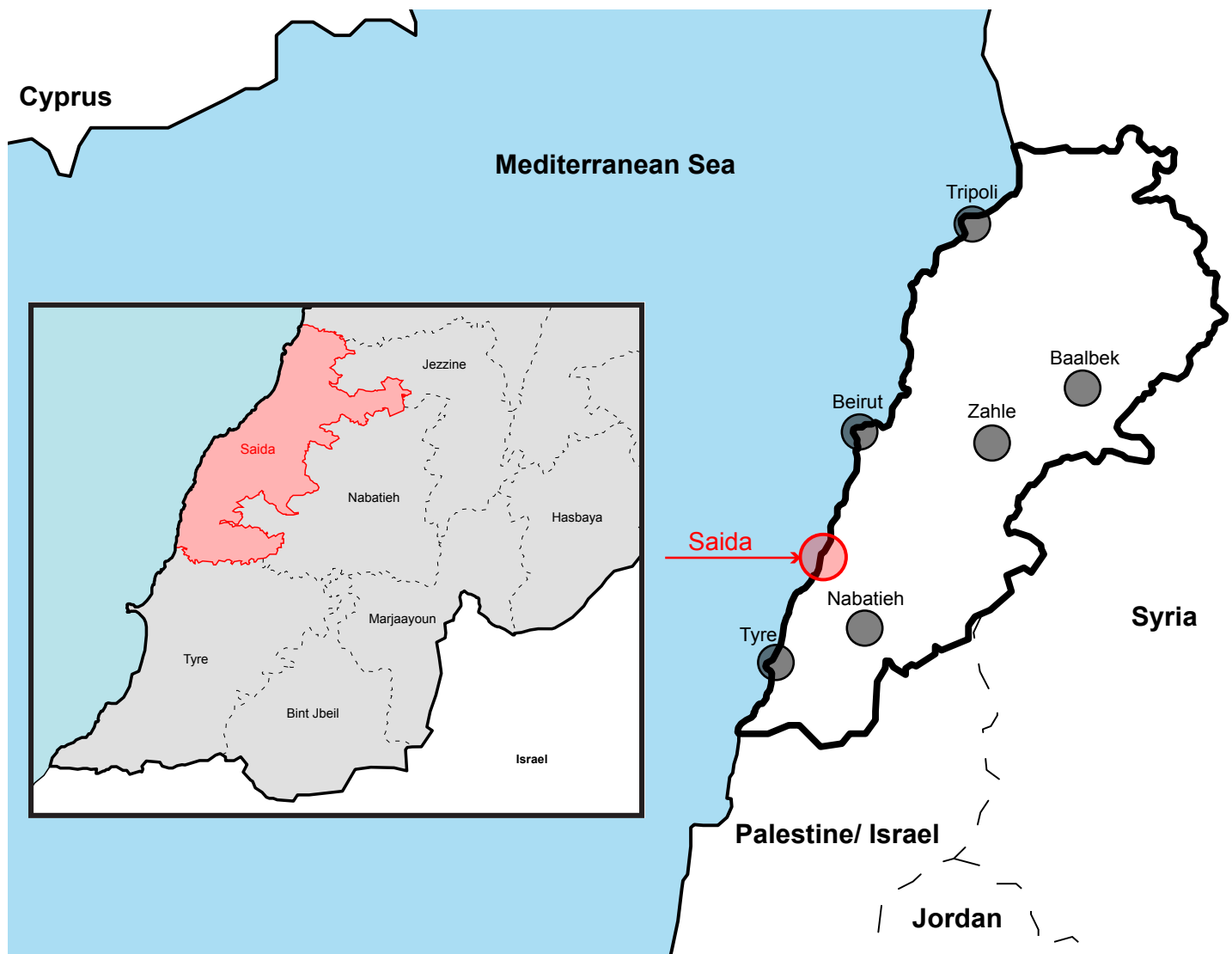
The Lebanese government's de facto impotence excludes the likelihood of a sustainable, effective centralized response. It has therefore been left to local and international institutions to respond to refugees' needs and ameliorate the crisis' huge impact on Lebanon's socioeconomics, politics, infrastructure, and national security. This study explores the level of involvement and cooperation of international and local (governmental and non-governmental) institutions in assessing and mediating the needs of the refugees.

In 2005-2006, the Lebanese Ministry of Social Affairs, financed by the World Bank, conducted the first official NGO survey in Lebanon. The data covers NGO characteristics related to structure and service delivery, as well as confessional and sectarian affiliations. The entire NGO population in Lebanon at the time of the survey was estimated at more than 6,000 organizations. The survey covered more than half of these NGOs (around 3350), 30% of which have confessional affiliations (Chaaban and Seyfert 2012).

Non-governmental welfare assistance, institutionalized in religious foundations, has figured prominently throughout Lebanon's history. A significant percentage of today's NGOs began during the Lebanese civil war as distinctly Muslim or Christian welfare service providers. During the post-war period, individual politicians and political parties started to found their own NGOs, financing them through large private donor contributions and international support. Today, most local NGOs in Lebanon run parallel to the sectarian and political divisions of the country. Some NGOs exclusively serve particular confessional groups, employing clientelism toward boosting the popularity and electoral advantage of their affiliated political party. Nonetheless, these NGOs continue to play an important role in service provision within their communities, as the state supplies little by way of public services. Even state-financed services are subcontracted to NGOs or other private providers (Chaaban and Seyfert 2012). It is important to note that the numbers presented in the Chaaban and Seyfert study regarding the population of local NGOs in Lebanon have increased significantly since the study's 2006 publication.

The city of Saida presents a unique humanitarian relief framework whose operational and managerial arrangement has proved to be distinctly functional. This section describes empirical observations of Saida's aid operations. It highlights Saida's specific context, the main actors involved in the relief process (Municipality, UNHCR, Local NGOs), refugee living conditions, and refugee sentiment. In Saida's arrangement, local Islamic NGOs have formed a coalition, appointing as its official representative a member of the city's Municipal Board. Most of the NGOs have been working in the city for over a decade, providing its lower income communities with welfare services, including healthcare and education. The city's NGOs, its political representatives, and the majority of its Lebanese and Syrian refugee residents are Sunni Muslims. This religious homogeneity has had a crucial impact upon the dynamics between Saida's inhabitants and institutions. Saida's specific aid framework illustrates the convergence of secular aid resources, mainly represented by the UNHCR and its international partners, and Islamic aid resources, represented by Saida's Islamic NGOs.

The Saida study is based on fieldwork entailing numerous field visits and interviews with representatives of the relevant institutions, including Mr. Mohamad Al Saoudi, mayor of Saida; Mr. Kamel Kouzbar, head of the NGO coalition and member of the Municipal Board; Mr. Tarek Bizri, representative of the Islamic Welfare Association (IWA) in Saida; Mr. Fadi Shamiye, president of the Humanitarian Collaboration Association (HCA) in Saida; Mr. Nasser Shabbane, representative of the HCA in Saida; a confidential source from the General Security office in the South of Lebanon; various representatives of local NGOs; and roughly 20 interviews with



Maps 3 & 4 - Map of Lebanon and Southern Lebanon
Source: Author Illustration

members of the Syrian refugee and Lebanese communities in two neighborhoods of Saida — the Historic District and Hayy El Barrad.

The thrust of this study is toward gaining in-depth knowledge of the operational environment of Saida. Through my research, fieldwork, and interviews, I observed a number of variables that have an important impact on Saida's operating environment and are therefore complexly interrelated to the management of the city's Syrian refugees. The "Operating Environment Variables" framework includes: Legislation, Economy, Public Services, Housing, General Security, Policing, Social Capital, and Transnational Aid. These variables are then elaborated into a set of idiosyncratic dimensions, each subject to descriptive measurement. This analytical arrangement yields complex interrelations within and between variables, and enables the study to simply and comprehensively convey the significance, effects, and options of each actor vis-à-vis its impact on Saida's operating environment. Ultimately, the Saida case study demonstrates the importance of the "Transnational Aid" variable in maintaining and developing localized aid modalities.

The research and fieldwork underpinning the study's findings reveal the critical importance of local NGOs, international aid organizations, and transnational donors to the maintenance of the Syrian refugees' basic survival needs. The activity of these actors is characterized by the simultaneous operation of two distinct humanitarian aid traditions, one informed by Western ideology predicated upon secular humanitarianism, the other by Islamic ideology predicated upon faith-based social commitment. Examining these traditions, this study identifies two distinct models for sourcing and administering humanitarian aid, herein categorized as the Secular Western Aid Model and the Faith-Based Islamic Aid Model. The section "Humanitarian Aid Models" presents and analyzes the structure, operations, financing, political interests, and ideologies of these two models. This analysis illuminates the advantages, disadvantages, limitations, and possibilities of the Western and Islamic aid modalities. An exploration of how the models are operating in specific context of Saida, yields insight into the conditions necessary for aid sustainment and expansion.

This study's methodology empowers it to make credible recommendations toward sustaining and improving Saida's existing aid framework. This knowledge stands to inform the methodologies and goals of local institutions and state-level policymakers, in addition to international institutions. Ultimately, this study promotes an aid paradigm that seeks to weave refugees (especially those anticipating long-term stays) into local socioeconomic fabrics, expanding and enriching economic and social life.

2. Literature Review

The literary research for this study engaged a wide range of sources, including newspaper articles, journals, scholarly works, and assessment and update reports by different international organizations. These sources helped frame a comprehensive understanding of the current refugee situation in Lebanon and in Saida. The sources informed the analytical frameworks proposed in this study, which investigate the principal variables of the aid operating environments of Saida and greater Lebanon. The sources also informed the identification of two humanitarian aid models critical to refugee management. Finally, the sources were fundamental to credibility and realism of this study's recommendations.

In the introduction, I referenced different sources to establish a contextual foundation for the refugee crisis in Lebanon, setting the conditions within its aid practitioners work. The legislative, socio-political, and historical contexts of Lebanon and Syria directly affect the urgency of the current crisis, its emergent obstacles, and the optimal strategy for refugee management. After framing the context of the Syrian civil war and its ongoing refugee displacement, the introduction looks at the Lebanese-Syrian historical relationship, identifies Lebanese legislation that frames refugee rights in the country, invokes the experience of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon as a point of reference, and outlines the response of Lebanese governmental and non-governmental institutions to the crisis.

First, I rely on the text of the 1951 Refugee Convention, published by the UNHCR, which sets the League of Nation's definition of refugees, and refugees' rights from and obligations towards their host nations. This document institutes a universalist perspective on refugees and their humanitarian needs, as defined by the International Community. The Lebanese government's non-accession to the Refugee Convention implies its official political attitude towards refugees. Additionally, I looked at UNRWA reports on Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, and Jaber Suleiman's work on the role of Lebanese legislation in shaping Palestinian refugees' socioeconomic status. Both demonstrate the country's historical legal posture toward refugees. Ultimately, legislation frames refugees' right to access employment, education, and social services, conditions that inevitably affect their living standards, community stability, and socioeconomic participation. The legal legacy of denial and constriction directly affects the aid policies and actions targeting Syrian refugees in Lebanon.

The historical relationship between Lebanon and Syrian is complex and fraught with sociopolitical tension. In this section, I reference a report by Search for Common Ground (SFCG) and the UNHCR, concerning the increasing tension between host communities and Syrian refugees. To that end, I also relied on a BBC News article by Tarek Osman on post-WWI Lebanon, as well as an article by Ian Black and Dan Roberts in *The Guardian* which discusses the continued involvement of Lebanese political factions in the Syrian war. These sources describe the historical socioeconomic, political, and military relations between Lebanon and Syria, back when they were part of Ottoman Greater Syrian until today. This information is crucial to fully grasping the existing biases and social perceptions between the two peoples. In some cities, like Tripoli, memories of Syrian military oppression have manifested in acute tensions and violent confrontations toward the Syrian refugee community. Furthermore, the scholarly works of Sara Van Vliet and Guita Hourani also serve to display Lebanon's regional differences in the conditions of Syrian refugees. Their paper states that the situation in the Southern region is better managed by the authorities and institutions involved. This was one of the primary reasons I chose to focus the case study on a city located in the South of Lebanon, leading me to Saida.

In the case study on Saida's humanitarian aid framework, I begin by presenting the specific context of the city. Saida's administrative structure, demographic traits, urban fabric, economy, housing sector, and public services are important elements setting the premise of the city's ability to respond to the crisis. To that end, I rely on Saida's 2013 Urban Sustainable Development Strategy (USDS) report to frame the city's operating environment. Saida's municipality, in partnership with the European Union, the Mediterranean Network for the Promotion of Urban Sustainable Development Strategies, and Barcelona's municipality, commissioned

the report to a local team of eight experts in the fields of urban planning, urban design, preservation, historiography, economy, and architecture. The report includes information describing the city's population size, demographics, income levels, poverty rates, infrastructure, and housing. These different elements serve as the stepping-stones for my analytical framework, in which I regroup some of them into categories that I define as Variables of the Operating Environment.

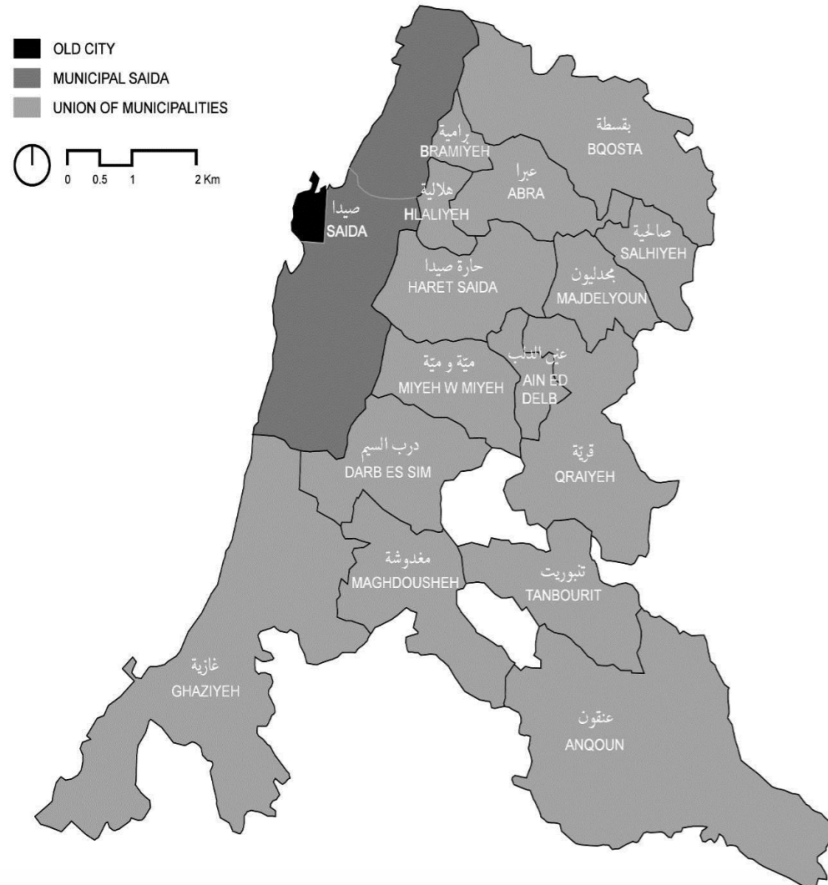
While researching and framing these variables, I relied upon local newspaper articles, and information and documents published by international aid organizations involved in the relief process. Most of these documents were published on the UNHCR website, including the UNHCR and United Nations Human Settlement Programme's (UN-Habitat) report on "Housing, Land, and Property Issues in Lebanon" (2014); the SFCG report on dialogue and UNHCR report on conflict resolution (2014); UNHCR shelter updates in Lebanon; UNHCR and international aid organizations' funding update reports (2012-2014); and UNHCR, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and the World Food Program's (WFP) vulnerability assessment reports (2013-2014). These sources often lack the intimate perspective of local NGOs, yet inform this study about the common variables of the Lebanese operating environment. These variables include issues such as economic status, affordable housing stock, public services, social capital, legal context for refugees, and national security.

The case study of Saida's relief framework and the analysis of variables of its operating environment shed light on an important pillar sustaining the city and the country's current response to the refugee crisis: Transnational Aid. This variable refers to, non-Lebanese, humanitarian aid donor states and organizations that are currently funding the relief operations of local and international NGOs in Lebanon. Given the Lebanese government's weak financial and operational response to the refugee crisis, the burden of funding humanitarian aid and basic services falls mainly on transnational donors. In the case of Saida, these donors are, both, Western secular and Arab Islamic. Therefore, in order to analyze these two sources and their distinct humanitarian aid models, I reference numerous journal and scholarly articles that present the models, highlight their achievements, and critic their shortcomings; starting with Jonathan Benthall's *Humanitarianism and Islam After 11 September*, and Marie Petersen's article on transnational Muslim NGOs. The first compares secular Western humanitarianism and Islamic humanitarianism in terms of their financing sources, transparency, accountability, ideological motivations, political interests, aid recipients, and their ability to access them. The second compares two transnational Islamic aid organizations, highlighting their different adaptations of Islamic humanitarianism. The information presented in these articles serve as analytical tools that allow me to assess Saida's relief framework, specifically two of its main actors: the local coalition of NGOs and international organizations. Understanding the ideological impetus, organizational structures, and operational protocols of these actors is crucial to pinpointing the particular strengths and weaknesses of their work in Saida. To that end, I refer to David Kennedy's *Dark Sides of Virtue: Reassessing International Humanitarianism* (2004), Michael Barnett's *Humanitarianism Transformed* (2005), *Alphabet City Magazine's Humanism Without Borders* dossier (2000), and an unpublished manuscript by Clara Irazabal and Juan Yunda critiquing the role of international humanitarian aid organizations and the outcome of their standardized relief approach in Latin American communities. The sources criticize different aspects of Western Humanitarianism, including the limitations of its universal perceptions of need, its standardized and institutionalized intervention, its increasing politicization, its growing corporate culture, and its absolute accountability to donors rather than recipients. Furthermore, Cilas Kemedjio's *Politics of Humanism* addresses the controversial media representations promoted by Western aid organizations, which focus on the misery of humans, stripping their identities down to their basic survival needs. The role of the media in instigating and promoting a specific type of humanitarian intervention is another crucial factor impacting any crisis. This growing interdependence is highlighted in Benthall's article, "The Disaster-Media-Relief Nexus" (2008), and Thomas Keenan's *Mobilizing Shame* (2005). The latter points out the risks associated to media interventions, which could counter the goals of humanitarian organizations, such as overexposure, voyeurism, donor fatigue, and "disaster pornography". This information serves as an important reference for my recommendations toward enhancing Saida's Transnational Aid variable and the actors involved in seeking and delivering it.

3. Case Study of Saida

Saida, located 45 km South of the capital of Beirut, is the third largest city in Lebanon. The Greater Saida region, originally home to 220,000 people, is currently housing an additional 20,500 Syrian refugees, or 3800 households. The city presents a unique humanitarian relief framework whose operational and managerial arrangement has proved to be distinctly functional. In Saida's arrangement, local Islamic NGOs have formed a coalition, appointing as its official representative a member of the city's Municipal Board. Most of the NGOs have been working in the city for over a decade, providing its lower income communities with welfare services, including healthcare and education. They seek their donations mainly from Arab governments and Islamic charities. The city's NGOs, its political representatives, and the majority of its Lebanese and Syrian refugee residents are Sunni Muslims. This religious homogeneity has had a crucial impact upon the dynamics between Saida's inhabitants and institutions. Although these organizations' operations are based largely upon traditional Islamic charity modalities, they have been increasingly adopting Western methods. Meanwhile, Saida's local NGOs have collaborated on a limited number of projects with the UNHCR and some of its international partner organizations, which have been heavily involved in the city's humanitarian aid framework.

This section begins with a brief overview of Saida's geographic, administrative, urban, demographic, and economic characteristics. This sets the tone of Saida's environment, highlighting the city's advantages and vulnerabilities, and their impact upon the local refugee circumstance. In order to fully assess Saida's relief framework, I present the main parties directly involved in refugee management: the municipality, the coalition of local NGOs, and the UNHCR. I study the managerial structure of these parties and the extent of their cooperative and coordinative relations. Finally, through field observations and interviews with around 20 members of the refugee and hosting communities, I analyze the strengths and vulnerabilities of the Saida model. The interviews help confirm some real outcomes of the Saida framework, and inform us about perceptions surrounding aid and integration processes within its Syrian and Lebanese communities.



Maps 5 - Municipality of Saida and Union of Municipalities of Saida and Zahrani

Source: USDS Report 2013

3.1. Context of Saida

The city of Saida has a population of over 80,000 living within its municipal boundaries, which extend 6 km along the Mediterranean coastline and reach 1-1.5 km inland for a total surface area of 7.5 km². The city is divided into three districts: the Historic District, Wastani, and Dekermen (USDC 2013).

The municipality of Saida is the administrative center of the Southern Governorate of Lebanon. It is the head of the Saida and Zahrani Union of Municipalities, which was founded in 1978 and includes 16 small municipalities. The union is the administrative platform of the Greater Saida region, which links the city to its neighboring inland villages, including Abra, Hlaliyeh, Miyeh w Miyeh, etc. Greater Saida has a total population of about 220,000 residing in an area of 154 km². The total revenues of Saida's municipality between 2002 and 2007, including property taxes, building permits, and its share of the national municipal fund, amount to about 12.5 million USD (USDC 2013). The majority of Saida's population is made up of Lebanese nationals between the age of 10 and 24 years old. The average household size in the city is 4 to 5 people. 25% of Saida's residents are Palestinian refugees residing either in the Historic District, or in and around the refugee camps of Ain El Helwe, Darb El Sim, and Miyeh w Mieyh (USDC 2013).

Until the mid 20th century, Saida's urban footprint was limited to the outer walls of its Historic District, its immediate surroundings, and some scattered houses along the coast. The city's urban expansion was triggered by the construction of major road networks linking it to the rest of the country. Saida's urban fabric developed along the main country road linking the Historic District to surrounding villages. During the civil war, the city was subjected to rapid population growth and sporadic development that generally did not adhere to building codes or zoning regulations. In 1995, the city established a new "Master Plan," which set in motion most of its infrastructural upgrades, especially in terms of sewage and rainwater drainage networks. These elements remain among Saida's critical infrastructural challenges. In Lebanon, discussion about urban services and infrastructure is often reduced to matters of traffic and road networks. In Saida, public transport is non-existent and all planning concerning the city's transportation infrastructure amount to little more than traffic and road designs (USDC 2013).

In 2004, Saida's housing tenure was constituted by 61% owner-based occupancy, 30% rental-based occupancy, and almost 9% free-of-charge occupancy for residents who were offered their houses by family members, employers, or local NGOs. Most of its Lebanese residents live in apartments, while 6.4% live in independent houses, and 2.4% live in impoverished dwellings. However, with the rise of poverty levels in the city, informal settlements have been expanding, especially around the Palestinian refugee camp of Ain El Helweh. Beyond some commentary on overcrowding, there is not much published information about the quality of housing in Saida. According to the UN-Habitat standard on overcrowding (defined as three or more people per room), Saida's average of 1.1 persons per room shows that there are no issues of overcrowding in the city. However, this average is not disaggregated by neighborhood, and therefore it is not a very comprehensive measurement for the whole city. The Historic District is known to have overcrowding issues, but as yet there is insufficient data supporting these observations.

In general, Saida's economic indicators present lower values than the national average. In 2004, 37% of households in Saida earned 200-330 USD per month, compared to the national minimum wage of ~140 USD per month. But less than 8% of Saida's workforce earned more than 800 USD per month, compared to 30% of the national workforce. During the same year, the unemployment rate in Saida was recorded at 15%, almost double the national unemployment rate of 7.9%. Saida's poverty indicators in 2004 were higher than the national average. The city's labor force participation was 46%, with women constituting only 14% of the total working population. This can be partly attributed to Saida's paternalist hierarchy and other socially conservative traits (USDC 2013).

Saida's 1995 Master Plan transformed all of the city's land into buildable property in order to encourage investment and development, which prompted a rise in real estate speculations. Today, land prices in Saida range from 300-2500 USD per m². The most affordable neighborhoods are the Historic District and the areas surrounding the three Palestinian refugee camps. This is mainly because of their substandard utilities infrastructure, living spaces, and security status. The neighborhoods around the Palestinian refugee camps have repeatedly suffered violent clashes between the Lebanese army and criminal groups operating from the camps.



Maps 6 - 1995 Masterplan of Saida

Source: USDS Report 2013

Saida has 45 local NGOs, excluding those working strictly in Palestinian refugee camps. These NGOs, most of which are Islamic, have been established for over a decade. Prior to the Syrian crisis, local NGOs were mainly concerned with the provision of healthcare and education to Saida's poorest populations (USDC 2013). Around 27 of these NGOs, including the four largest in the city, have founded Saida's local coalition of NGOs (Bizri January, 2015).

Overall, Saida is characterized by economic weakness, real-estate inflation, below-average living standards, infrastructural problems, and some security concerns. The city also exhibits a high level of demographic homogeneity of Sunni Muslim families. The number of NGOs in the city also indicates that there is significant mobilization of capital amongst the host community, which is crucial to the overall management of the growing Syrian refugee crisis.

3.2. Local Coalition of NGOs in Saida

The case of Saida differs from other host cities primarily because it is located further away from the Lebanese-Syrian border. As a result, refugees did not settle in Saida until Winter 2011 (six to eight months into the war). This gave local authorities and agencies time to prepare for their inevitable arrival. Today, data indicates that Saida contains almost 3800 Syrian families (approximately 20,500 people), who are residing in about two-dozen neighborhoods around the Greater Saida region (Interviews with Bizri and Kouzbar, January 2015).

According to Kamel Kouzbar, head of Saida's NGO coalition, most of the organizations forming today's coalition have benefitted from prior cooperation, namely during the 2006 July War between Hizballah and Israel. That conflict led to the displacement of around 900,000 civilians, mostly from South Lebanon and Beirut's southern suburbs (UNRWA report). During the July War, local authorities and NGOs in Saida, with the assistance of international organizations, managed 175,000 displaced people, many of whom were sheltered in 20 public and private schools (HFSHD, 2006).

With that cooperative backdrop, a couple of months after the crisis started, Saida's local NGOs began to coordinate their response. In September 2011, the representatives of 27 local organizations established a coalition and assigned Kamel Kouzbar as its leader. Most of the NGOs are Islamic, benefitting from Arab donors and Islamic charities. The representatives chose Kouzbar because of his official position as a member of Saida's municipal board, his first-hand experience in aid and relief work during the 2006 war, and his impartiality toward all of the organizations involved (Kouzbar doesn't belong to or have a formal stake in any of them). (Interview with Bizri, January 2015). The strong relationship between the municipality and the coalition is thus predicated upon the composition of the coalition itself. In the wake of its foundation, representatives of local organizations (along with Kouzbar) started visiting institutions in other localities, studying their systems for aid procurement and refugee integration (Interview with Kouzbar, January 2015).

In my interview with Tarek Bizri (January 2015), an agent of the Islamic Welfare Association (IWA) in Saida, he emphasized the importance of the data inquiry process on the efficiency and success of their work. Bizri explained that, upon its foundation, the coalition assigned the IWA responsibility of managing data on Syrian refugees in the city. This entailed crosschecking the existing data of all NGOs involved, developing a process for registering Syrian newcomers, and refining methods for the continuous update and verification of data. With the help of Kouzbar, the coalition established a registration office in Saida's municipal building, then launched numerous campaigns directing refugees to register in order to receive donations and assistance. They used volunteers to disseminate posters, banners, and leaflets all over the city. The IWA requested information including the refugees' town of origin, the number of people in the family, their ages, genders, educational levels, working skills or experience, health problems or disabilities, detailed address in Saida, and

السكن سوريا	العنوان في لبنان	عدد افراد العائلة	المعلومات الشخصية
حمص	بناية الزعترى وحنينة ط رابع	5	محمد حسن
حمص	بناية مصطفى سالي ط 4	4	محمد مصطفى
	بناية الشمع والقوام ط 2 فوق الجندولين	5	رائد محمد سعيد
ادلب	قرب سوبر ماركت النقاى مقابل بناية زيدان ط1 بناية السوسى	4	محمد مصطفى
مخيم يرموك	مقابل محل تلفونات ORANGE ط6	7	محمود موسى
ادلب	مقابل فروج الرواس موقف ابو رامى ط سفلى	6	أحمد موسى
ادلب	مقابل فروج الرواس بناء زيدان ط ارضى	4	صباحى غازي
دمشق	مقابل مدرسة الكويت بناية لين بالصليب الاحمر غرفة ناطور	5	خليل علي
حمص	مجمع الحلبي ط5	4	لؤي عبد المعطي
ادلب	مقابل ثانوية البزري بناية الحلبي ط1	7	بسام عبد الكريم
ادلب	مقابل ثانوية البزري بناية الحلبي ط5	5	عمران محمود
دمشق	مقابل قول السوسى بناية دندشلى عرفة ناطور	4	ناصر باشا
مخيم يرموك	بجانب مكتبة العصرية بناء الخليلى ط8	1	قاسم محمد ديب

Table 1 - Sample of the IWA's Data on Refugees in Hay El Barrad Neighborhood in Saida

Source: IWA 2015

their cell phone numbers. The coalition even reserved a small fund to provide mobile phones for newcomers who could not afford them (Bizri, January 2015).

The coalition formed an investigative team tasked with regular visits to refugees. This process has enabled representatives of the coalition to establish direct and personal relationships with the communities they are serving, creating a platform of trust and candor. The primary function of the team is to ensure the accuracy of catalogued information, to assess and prioritize refugee needs, and to identify refugee families that have left the city. Nasser Shabbane, an investigator and employee of the Humanitarian Collaboration Association (HCA) in Saida and a Syrian himself, said they have encountered instances where families registered in Saida were not actually living in the city, and were nonetheless extracting donations from Saida's NGOs (January 2015). He also explained that these regular assessments and inspections are crucial toward truly understanding people's needs and fairly allocating donations.

In order to discourage competition between the organizations in the coalition, and in the aim of satisfying wide-ranging refugee issues, each NGO in the coalition has been assigned a specific aid category: healthcare, food vouchers or provisions, clothing, rent vouchers, education, etc. (Shamiye Interview, January 2015). This categorization is a way for local NGOs to balance their efforts and resources toward optimizing impact. Any organization expecting a donation notifies the IWA, providing it with details regarding the nature and size of the donation. IWA representatives review the data, and then prioritize families with characteristics that are specific to the donation, newcomers with pressing needs, and those who have not received aid in the previous distribution. Finally, IWA representatives provide NGOs with lists of potential recipients and their relevant contact information. Upon the arrival of donations, refugees qualifying for the aid recipient list receive a text message with specifics on the date and time of distribution. Distribution usually takes place in Saida's football stadium and is executed by volunteers and NGO representatives, underneath the security umbrella of the police.



Image 1 - Syrian Refugees Waiting in Line for Distribution of Donations

Source: IWA 2015

These processes have helped increase the organizational and operational efficiency of the coalition. By instituting different focus sectors (education, healthcare, shelter, etc.) and protocols to manage registration and distributions, the NGOs have made a concerted effort to minimize resource waste and to ensure equitable distribution of aid. These embedded accountability measures echo the professionalism touted by Western aid modalities.

Regarding donors, Bizri explained that some NGOs have long-standing relationships with Arab and Islamic organizations or donor states which predate the Syrian crisis. Other relationships have been cultivated in the last four years, through application to donor organizations, or by dispatching representatives to make appeals to specific donors (January 2015). Bizri stated that 90% of the donations received so far have been in the form of cash, while 10% were products such as clothes or hygiene kits. Their records also show that the value of donations has ranged between 15,000-300,000 USD.

The coalition's publications, along with my interviews with Kouzbar, Bizri, and the mayor, have indicated relationships with donor organizations including Ishraq Al Nour (Lebanon), Al Amana Center (Kuwait), Al Eslah Society (Bahrain), Al Bonyan Campaign (Kuwait), and Al Rahma International Charity (Kuwait). As for local NGOs' operational costs and managerial fees, those are either outlined by the NGO in their proposals or allocated as a percentage by each donor organization. Costs and fees usually range between 15-20% of the total donation (Bizri Interview, January 2015). However, NGOs' financial transactions and expenditure reports remain relatively opaque and inaccessible to the public. The NGOs do not publish details of their funding sources, administrative costs, funding per project, or total funding appeals and budgets.

When asked about the strategies and processes adopted in other localities, Bizri explained that Saida's coalition is not entirely unique; some other cities and regions also have their own local coalitions. However, Saida's coalition is distinct for its direct and official collaboration with the city's local authorities (i.e. the municipality and the security forces). Based upon his personal experience with distributing donations outside of Saida, Bizri noted most municipalities' lack of involvement in the relief process, and their complete dependency on the work of local and international agencies. He also noted competition within those coalitions, which inhibits a truly cooperative process. According to Kouzbar, another successful element of Saida's model is the fact that, through its cooperation with the municipality, the local coalition has established a direct relationship with international agencies (e.g. UNHCR), which usually deal only with local authorities.



Images 2 & 3 - Syrian Refugees in Saida's Historic District Receiving Food Provisions from Local NGOs
Source: IWA 2015

3.3. Municipality

The relationship between Saida's local NGOs and the municipality began with the appointment of Kouzbar as head of the coalition. In doing so, the coalition established direct and constant representation of their interests within the municipal board. This increased access and time-efficiency toward securing official consent for proposals. In addition to providing the coalition with a registration space, the municipality's allowance of stadium access for distributions, and its coordination with local security forces, have been important contributions to Saida's aid framework (Al Saoudi Interview, January 2015).

The financial burden of this partnership however falls overwhelmingly upon the coalition and its donors. In this case, like many others, the municipality does not act as a fundraiser or financier for aid operations; that role is left to local and international organizations (Kouzbar Interview January, 2015). The advantage of this collaboration lies in the official position it provides the coalition, strengthening its legitimacy among the host and refugee communities in the city, thus increasing the flexibility and efficiency of its operations.

During my interview with Mr. Mohamad Al Saudi (January 2015), the mayor of Saida, he stated that his personal involvement with the coalition and its projects is limited to major events and decisions impacting the city as a whole. Mayor Al Saudi clarified that Kouzbar is in charge of following up with the details of the organizations' day-to-day operations, regularly presenting him with highlights of their work, decisions, and arising needs or demands. According to Mayor Al Saudi, this collaborative process continues to succeed because it has enabled the city to simultaneously keep up its responsibilities toward local Lebanese communities, without diverting resources and creating a deficit in the municipal budget.

The mayor did note the risks of a prolonged Syrian presence in the city and the rest of Lebanon. A substantial decrease in donations from local and international NGOs in the past two years has raised concerns about the sustainability of Saida's relief framework. Kouzbar reiterated these concerns, saying "We are merely patching up the problem; we are not solving it" (January 2015).



Image 4 - Meeting with Saida's Mayor, the Head of the Local Coalition , and Representatives of local NGOs
Source: Municipality Official Website

3.4. UNHCR and Other International Organizations

In the beginning of the crisis, the Lebanese government's attitude towards the influx of Syrian refugees was characterized by neglect and dissociation. For the first five months of the conflict, the Lebanese government did not even officially recognize the presence of refugees within its jurisdiction. This posture was employed by then-PM Mikati, who claimed "the treaties and agreements between the two countries forbid Lebanese interference in Syria's internal matters" (Van Vliet and Hourani 2012, 18). This political detachment prevented the Lebanese government from getting directly involved in the crisis, leaving local NGOs, the UNHCR and other international humanitarian outfits with the responsibility of procuring and delivering refugee aid. The central government's dissociation hindered the effectiveness of early initiatives to stem the crisis.

The UNHCR and other international agencies mounted initiatives in the South of Lebanon after more than six months into the crisis. Some of these organizations indicated that, as opposed to the Bekaa or the North, the administrative structure, social culture, and security situation of the South have allowed for a more efficient and locally embedded humanitarian response (Van Vliet and Hourani 2014).

A UNHCR report from October 2013 describes the agency's overall strategy and its collaboration with local and international NGOs, addressing issues of housing, education, healthcare, food supply, and other basic services. My interviews with representatives of Saida's local NGOs, on the other hand, revealed the limitations of working with the UNHCR and other international organizations. Kouzbar and Bizri stated that UN agencies in Lebanon rarely collaborate with small local NGOs, usually partnering up with international organizations – such as Mercy Corp, Islamic Relief Worldwide, Oxfam, and Premiere Urgence – or with large well-established Lebanese agencies, like the Makhzoumi Foundation and Caritas Lebanon. In Saida, most of the UNHCR's operational partners are non-Lebanese aid organizations.

According to Kouzbar, limitations are inevitable given the UN's highly bureaucratic and inflexible protocol, drawbacks that have hindered attempts at true collaboration between Saida's NGO coalition and the UNHCR. Kouzbar explained that when the agency established its office in Tyre – a city south of Saida – the coalition was active in assisting them with data-gathering by renting buses to transport refugees from Saida to the UNHCR office for registration. Yet, when asked to share its data with the coalition, the UNHCR refused. Bizri also highlighted some discrepancies in data published by the UNHCR on the number of refugees in Saida, mainly at the start of the crisis. According to their July 2013 publication on the distribution of registered Syrian refugees in the South and Nabatiyeh governorates, the UNHCR reported approximately 11,800 refugees residing in Saida. This figure was about 40% less than the coalition's number at the time (Bizri Interview, January 2015).

Despite these limitations, the UNHCR remains a major source of aid procurement and distribution. They fund more than 40 collective shelters, and have partnered with other international organizations to help them operate these shelters. The coalition and the UNHCR have collaborated on a few projects and have established a direct interface that no longer requires the mediation of Saida's local authorities. According to Bizri, the UNHCR's assistance was focused on food vouchers and healthcare. Kouzbar also mentioned the donation of trash containers and water pumps to the city, but contended that the process of requesting and receiving such donations is complicated, time consuming, and inefficient.

Over the past three years, the UNHCR and other international agencies have been facing significant financial obstacles as a result of simultaneous increases in their appeal budget and decreases in received donations. The UNHCR's annual Syrian Regional Response Plans (RRPs) describe the finances of all agencies working in Lebanon. The reports demonstrate a widening financial gap:

	December 2012	December 2013	December 2014
Appeal Budget	267,087,536 \$	1,216,189,393 \$	1,515,491,900 \$
Received Funds	233,828,616 \$	881,769,237 \$	794,515,584 \$
Gap	33,258,920 \$	334, 420, 156 \$	720,976,316 \$
Coverage	88%	73%	52%

Table 2 - Comparing Appeal budgets and received funds in 2012, 2013, and 2014. Source: UNHCR

These deficits have resulted in major strains on the agencies' ability to mitigate the crisis. The United Nations World Food Program's (WFP) temporary suspension of food voucher assistance in December 2014, which was helping 1.7 million Syrian refugees in Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey, and Egypt, is a noteworthy example of the abruptly shifting financial liabilities of the crisis, and the risks of monolithic sourcing (Cumming-Bruce and Gladstone, 2014).

3.5. Fieldwork

This section presents and analyzes the testimonies of respondents impacted by the refugee influx and aid operation. The analysis involves about 20 interviews with Syrian refugees and Lebanese residents in two neighborhoods. Field notes will illustrate living conditions and assess their main vulnerabilities. This aspect of the study is crucial to understanding the advantages and shortcomings of the institutions' work, and to evaluating aspects for sustainability and replication.



Map 7 - Location of Historic District and Hay El Barrad Neighborhoods (Fieldwork location)

Source: Author Illustration

As mentioned earlier, the fieldwork for this case study is focused in two specific neighborhoods in Saida: the Historic District and Hay El Barrad. The chosen neighborhoods are among the highest in concentration of Syrian refugees and have distinct characteristics in terms of urban fabric and demographics. The Historic District's current infrastructure dates back to the 18th century, with some upgrades throughout the neighborhood, making it more vulnerable to issues of overcrowding and overloading. Its urban fabric presents medieval spatial characteristics with narrow alleyways, vaulted passages, and a low-rise dense fabric.



Image 5 - Paorama of Saida's Seafront

Source: http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Panorama_of_Sidon_from_the_castle.jpg

The Historic District occupies an area of 0.2 Km² only 6% of the total municipal area of Saida. In 2010, the neighborhood was home to almost 16,500 people, 44% of which were Palestinians, 52% Lebanese, and 3.5% Egyptians and Syrians (USDC 2013). According to the coalition's data, the neighborhood is currently housing around 1200 Syrian refugees. The living standards and demographics of its residents characterize the Historic District as a lower income neighborhood. By contrast, Hay El Barrad presents a more "modern" architectural environment, as it was mostly developed after Saida's major land pooling and re-parceling project in the late 1980s (USDC 2013). According to the coalition's registration data, this neighborhood is currently housing about 740 Syrian refugees.



Image 6 - Residential Buildings in the Historic District
Source: Personal Image Taken by Author (January 2015)



Images 7 & 8 - Narrow Alleyway and Electrical Wiring in the Historic District
 Source: Personal Image Taken by Author (January 2015)



Image 9 - Residential Street in the Hay El Barrad
 Source: Personal Image Taken on Behalf of Author (January 2015)



Image 10 - Residential Buildings in the Hay El Barrad

Source: Personal Image Taken on Behalf of Author (January 2015)

While conducting my interviews and field visits, I was given access to 16 units occupied by Syrian refugees, which in both neighborhoods evidenced substandard living conditions. The houses I visited in the Historic District suffered from bad insulation, dilapidated roof structures causing leaks and excess humidity, and deteriorated infrastructure leading to sanitation and drainage problems. Refugees were living in overcrowded conditions, sometimes with 8 or more people living in one or two rooms. Some of these units did not have kitchens or bathroom fixtures. Syrian families within the neighborhood mentioned that the municipality and the coalition had provided funds to reinforce and waterproof the roof structures of their housing units. The dwellings I visited in Hay El Barrad were all ground floor commercial units, mainly comprised of one room and a mezzanine space. These units were often overcrowded with families of ten or more people. Being neither planned nor equipped for housing, these “converted” units lacked basic sanitation and insulation. Fixtures and stoves were often informally added, yet these additions were frequently installed improperly, resulting in constant overflows and drainage problems.

My research illustrates that the settlement of Syrian refugees in Saida was not limited to one neighborhood or area. Instead, the 3800 refugee families currently residing in the city are dispersed over 25 neighborhoods. Kouzbar explained that the coalition initially focused on preventing cases of squatting and made sure that the social and infrastructural load of the Syrian refugees would be absorbed as evenly as possible across the city (January 2015). Their goal was to prevent a concentration of refugees in certain neighborhoods, which might threaten to upend socioeconomic stability and overload physical infrastructure. Field observations revealed that Syrian presence in Saida did not nullify neighborhoods’ Lebanese character, but diversified it.

During my interviews, I inquired about the refugee families’ sources of income and their average wages. In most cases, each family has one breadwinner, usually a male figure (either father, son, or brother). However, in some families, where the father figure is absent, or physically challenged, and the boys are too young to work,

the women (mother or daughter) are the income providers. My research revealed that most of the Syrian men have either taken up heavy labor jobs such as construction or steel work, plumbing, carpentry, or service jobs such as waiting/bussing tables or street sales (of coffee or cotton candy). Women are mostly working as saleswomen in clothing stores or waitresses at coffee shops and restaurants. The incomes of these positions range between 250 USD and 400 USD per month, which is barely enough to cover a family's monthly rent. In most cases, refugee families also depend on the United Nations WFP food vouchers that work like debit cards, allowing them to buy 30 USD of food per month from specific supermarkets around the city. However, with the reduction in UN donations, the value of these vouchers has dropped to 19 USD per month. Most families also mentioned receiving a number of donations through the coalition, however they all noted the time gaps between each donation and to their significant decrease in the past year (those that received aid in July did not receive further cash aid until January).

One main concern of most Syrian families has been the uncertain fate of their children's academic futures. As part of an agreement between the UNHCR and the Lebanese government, the former delegated the issue of education and its appropriate funds to the Lebanese Ministry of Education, who in turn became responsible for providing educational services to the refugee population. However, the Syrian 2014-2015 academic year, which was supposed to start in September 2014, was delayed by four months. During that time, due to uncertainty, a lot of Syrian families went back to Damascus to ensure that their kids did not miss another year of school. According to Kouzbar and Bizri, this delay was part of the Lebanese government's ongoing strategy to disincentivize Syrian migration and long-term settlement. The problem of education is not limited to the refugees of Saida, but remains a concern for Syrian families all over Lebanon.

The influx of Syrian refugees has resulted in the loss of jobs and decline in wages for multiple segments of the Lebanese working class. This has taken its toll on the relationship between host and refugee communities. Some of the Lebanese business owners interviewed in Hay El Barrad and the Historic District included a mini market owner, a carpenter, and a fabric salesman. These business owners explained that their choice to hire Syrian workers (instead of Lebanese) was not solely contingent on their lower wages, but also on their work ethic. Their Syrian employees always show up on time, are willing to work late, do not complain about the job, and are meticulous about their craft. This was more than could be said about their Lebanese employees.

As reflected in the UNHCR reports on conflict resolution between Lebanese hosts and Syrian refugees, and reiterated by Saida's mayor and the NGO coalition head, the decline in job opportunities has been one of the main tension triggers between the two communities. In some regions, coupled with existing political tensions and a lack of security control, this tension has culminated in physical violence between hosts and refugees. In Saida, my interviews revealed a minimal amount of interaction between Syrians and their Lebanese neighbors. Most families expressed reservations toward host communities. According to them, most Lebanese are discriminative towards Syrians and treat them with superiority, which is why they keep to themselves. However, there have been no reports of tension to the point of violence in Saida.

According to a confidential source from the General Security office in Saida (January 2015), the dominant family orientation of the refugee community, along with the city's conservative character, are important factors to Saida's stable security environment. He stated that the South has demonstrated higher levels of control and stability, with less crime and terrorist attacks, than other regions in Lebanon. He explained that Saida differs from the rest of the South because its local authorities and institutions have been attentive to and active in maintaining the city's security without resorting to "inhumane" restrictions of refugee freedom. He specified that in other cities, local authorities have enforced night curfews, random searches, and checkpoints on Syrian refugees residing within their jurisdictions. Saida's local coalition and municipality deemed such measures to be unnecessary and counterproductive. They argued that, as many Syrians hold night jobs or work outside the city, these restrictions on mobility would narrow income opportunities, possibly increasing social tension and the aid burden. Therefore, Saida's strong and stable security status can be attributed to its conservative social

setting, the dominant familial character of its refugees, coordinated efforts to disperse the concentration of refugees throughout the city's neighborhoods, and their role in protecting the Syrians' freedom of mobility and human rights.

Saida's stability can be partly attributed to the local coalition's strategy to create a stake for the Lebanese hosts around the presence of Syrians. In his interview, Bizri explained that, about six months ago, the coalition agreed to ask its donors to reserve 20-30% of their donations for lower income Lebanese host families, whose livelihoods have been affected by the Syrian presence. In his interview, he mentioned that the coalition's NGOs have accumulated extensive data on Saida's poorest Lebanese residents, which they refer back to when they receive their donations. According to Kouzbar, this strategy has been effective at minimizing and partially dissolving the rising socioeconomic tensions between the two communities.

Finally, during my field visits I acquired first-hand insight into the refugees' sentiments and relationships with representatives of local NGOs and the UNHCR. Nasser Shabbane, a representative of the HCA and one of the coalition's investigators, accompanied me during my field visits and helped me locate the houses and apartments of refugees in both neighborhoods. His familiar interaction and detailed knowledge of almost every refugee's name, family members, exact address, and specific needs was a clear sign of the coalitions' personalized approach and methods. In contrast, when I asked them about their ability to access UNHCR representatives and funds, the refugees expressed some limitations. One of the refugees pointed out that she was promised healthcare subsidies to cover her hospital bills, which she never received. Another stated that the UNHCR's hotline in the South has been dysfunctional; it's either busy or disconnected. Many explained that the time and cost of reaching out to the UNHCR and presenting their need exceeds their capacity and, more often than not, it reaps no benefit. Most of these refugees cannot afford to take the time off work, or away from their kids, to travel for an hour back and forth (via taxi or bus) to the UNHCR's office in the city of Tyre, where they would have to wait for their turn to fill out an application and talk to a representative. Overall, the UNHCR's approach is clearly a lot less personal than the local NGOs, and the refugees seem to have little faith in the international organization's methods and promises.

4. Analytic Framework

The case study of Saida offers a wealth of information about the experience of Syrian refugees, the activities of local NGOs, the operations of the UNHCR, and the postures of local and central governments. This section presents an analytic framework into which this information can be organized. Having three parts, this framework is a progression of specificity: Variables, Dimensions, and Humanitarian Aid Models.

First, the most important variables of Lebanon's operating environment are isolated and given contextual description. These variables include Legislation, Economy, Public Services, Housing, General Security, Policing, Social Capital, and Transnational Aid.

Having isolated and contextualized each variable, the framework next identifies dimensions within each variable. These dimensions are formed by information acquired through the case study and literature review, and are specific to Saida's operating environment. Each dimension is measured along a range from "very high" to "very low". This simple measurement allows the reader to clearly grasp the status or "strength" of each dimension. A qualitative explanation follows each measurement.

This "high/low" approach to measuring dimensions is not meant to be moralistic; an increase to one dimension could well lead to abrupt degradations of other dimensions. This point is made clear in the recommendations section (which makes recommendations at the dimension-level), which structurally embeds the fact that bolstering any given dimension can have both positive and negative externalities. However the dimensions *are* structured in a way so that "high" valuations accord with the normative spirit of this study: the stable liberalization of human activity.

The Variables and their elaborated Dimensions, within this model, make something very clear. Most of the variables of Saida's operating environment - Legislation, Economy, Public Services, House, General Security, and Policing - consist heavily of low-rated dimensions. The dimensions that rate strongly are within Social Capital and Transnational Aid. This result confirms the story that began to emerge within the case study narrative: the ineptitude of formal government institutions, built shoddily upon national and regional conditions of chauvinistic sectarianism, has left the task of refugee management to local NGOs (an expression of local social capital), their benefactors (Islamic transnational aid institutions), and the UNHCR (Western transnational aid institutions).

Local social capital is a fascinating topic that is modestly engaged within the Variable/Dimensions framework, and which features heavily in the study's final recommendations to actors. More striking, however, is the pivotal role of both Western and Islamic aid sources. If either were to vanish, the situation of Saida's refugees would degenerate rapidly. And yet, these two wellsprings for on-the-ground humanitarian resources have distinct operational modalities, and are founded upon dramatically different ideologies.

Given these glaring differences, I decided to further investigate the variable of Transnational Aid. Examining its dimensions, a picture emerges of two distinct models for the procurement, distribution, and sustenance of humanitarian aid. One is predicated upon Western notions of universal human rights, alongside rigidly defined standards for human needs and scientific management methodologies. The other is predicated upon Islamic notions of religious responsibility, alongside subjective cultural understandings of need and entrusted personal networks.

Thus emerges the last part of this study's analysis, the presentation of two Humanitarian Aid Models: Secular Western Humanitarian Aid, and Faith-Based Islamic Humanitarian Aid. The creation of this dual conceptual model is particularly important for interpreting and facilitating Saida's refugee crisis, because Saida's ability to effectively manage the crisis has been thus far due to the interdependent functioning of Western and

Islamic aid modalities. Given that interdependence, this study asserts that Saida is an example of a *hybridized aid framework*, featuring both secular Western and faith-based Islamic aid modalities. It is therefore critically important to fully explore the constitution and dynamics of each aid model, so that 1) nothing is done to fatally disrupt either modality, and 2) well-founded recommendations can be made for the expansion and optimization of both approaches.

This analytic framework therefore begins with a selection of variables important to Saida's aid operating environment, proceeds to subcategorize those variables into descriptively measured dimensions, and then builds a dual conceptual model in order to better grasp one of the most pivotal variables of Saida's operating environment. This analytic framework will empower the study to make broader, more reactive, and more realistic recommendations.

4.1. Variables of the Operating Environment for Lebanon's Aid Organizations

In any refugee context, a range of variables characterizes the operating environment for aid coordination, procurement, and distribution. The case study of Saida helped to isolate and illuminate the most important of those variables, including Legislation, Economy, Housing, Public Services, General Security, Policing, Social Capital, and Transnational Aid. The quality of each variable has a significant contribution to the essential circumstances of any actors managing a refugee crisis. This broad variable set serves as a basis for this study's subsequent detailed examination of the components and dynamics at play.

4.1.1. Variable #1 – Legislation

A host country's legislation towards refugees is one of the main variables impacting their living conditions, access to public services, and humanitarian assistance. Refugees' rights to work, to education, healthcare, shelter, access to judiciary courts, and international aid are contingent on the host country's legal provisions on refugees. Their legal rights vary between different host countries and affect the latter's response and attitude towards the population of concern. This greatly impacts the operating environment of aid organizations and the scope of services they need to provide. In the case of Lebanon, the central government's involvement in the relief and aid process resembles its refugee legislation. It has been inconsistent, weak, if not completely absent. Most of the relief work, welfare assistance, and services provided to refugees in Lebanon, Palestinians and Syrians, come from Western humanitarian agencies and local NGOs seeking funds from Arab donors.

Lebanon is not part of the 1951 Refugee Convention, nor does it have to enforce its provisions. The Lebanese Law does not define the word "refugee" (Suleiman 2006, 14). The state considers people who enter illegally to seek asylum, or who enter legally but then overstay their visas for the same purpose, as illegal immigrants subject to legal prosecution, and deportation. The 2003 MOU between Lebanon's General Security and the UNHCR asserts that Lebanon is not an "asylum country"; however, it aims to provide "temporary humanitarian solutions for the problems of people entering and residing unlawfully in Lebanon" (Human Rights Watch 2007, 16).

Although Lebanon is not bound by the Refugee convention's provisions on non-refoulement, Syrian nationals were allowed unrestricted entry into the Lebanese borders, based on the 1993 socio-economic agreement between the two nations (Lebanese Ministry of Economy and Trade and Syrian Ministry of Economy and Foreign Trade, 2003). However, as of December 2014, Lebanon no longer holds an open border policy towards Syrians. The host government introduced entry new restrictions for Syrians crossing the borders. It imposed six strict visa categories resembling those enforced on foreign nationals (Naylor and Haidamous, 2014). These categories include a business or work visa (requiring a Lebanese sponsor and a 2000 USD fee), a tourist visa, a student visa, a property owner visa, and a medical visa (Personal Interview January, 2015).

4.1.2. Variable #2 – The Economy

A host country's national economy has a direct impact on its ability to cater for refugees' needs within its jurisdiction, in terms of public services, healthcare, shelter, etc. Simultaneously, the increase in population impacts the host country's job market and drains its national budget. Therefore, the economy constitutes as one of the variables of the operating environment affecting the refugee crisis and the work of institutions involved in its relief process.

The disparities in needs and aid response are directly related to a host country's economy and finances. The UNHCR's 2015 funding appeal for Turkey's 1.7 million Syrian refugees is around 625 million USD, while its 2015

appeal for Lebanon's 1.2 million refugees is reaching two billion USD. This presents an obvious distinction between the aid organizations' economic operating environments in the two host countries. The Lebanese government is operating on a total national reserve of 47.8 billion USD (World Bank 2013) and a public debt equal to 138% of its total GDP (Lebanese Ministry of Finance 2014), while the Turkish government's national reserve is over 130 billion USD and a public debt equal to 45% of its GDP (World Bank 2013).

In the case of Lebanon, the economic decline of the past two years has been directly related to the increase of Syrian refugees in the country. An assessment of the economic and social impact of the Syrian conflict on Lebanon from 2012 to 2014 showed a 3% annual decline in GDP, including major losses in job opportunities, wages, taxes, profits, private investment, and consumption. According to Central Bank of Lebanon statistics, the country currently faces a financial burden of 4.5 billion USD in governmental spending due to increased demand for public services, housing, healthcare, and employment opportunities (Naharnet Newsdesk, 2015).

According to World Bank data, the increased supply of Syrian labor workers who accept lower wages than the legal minimum has caused job losses and wage decline for multiple segments of the Lebanese working class. The World Bank's study estimated the unemployment rate in Lebanon to have thereby doubled between 2012-2014 (SFCG, 2014). The burden of creating job opportunities and controlling wage decline has become another task assigned to local governments through creating incentives, regulating minimum wages, and implementing capacity-building programs.

4.1.3. Variable #3 – Public Services

Access to and quality of public services are directly affected by the increase in population demand brought by the influx of refugees into any given location. Countries with upgraded infrastructure have a larger physical capacity of absorbing the fast population growth with fewer risks of discontinued public services such as water, electricity, waste disposal, etc. However, in countries and areas with outdated and overloaded infrastructure, the people risk suffering from shortages and infrastructural malfunctions (drainage problems or leaks). In addition to accessibility, the quality and sustainability of these services are directly related to the continuous influx and growth of refugee populations.

In Lebanon, according to an assessment report by REACH organization and the UNHCR on Lebanese communities hosting Syrian refugees in the North, "the surge in demand is currently being met through a decline in both the access to and the quality of public services delivery" (REACH and UNHCR 2014, 30). The study estimated a cost of 2.5 billion USD for the restoration of services to their condition before the crisis. In many localities, the government does not provide basic public services, such as trash collection, electricity, and water. Instead, contractors, local associations, and private citizens have assumed a major role. This has led to unregulated inflation in the cost of those services on both refugee and Lebanese communities (REACH and UNHCR 2014).

Lebanese healthcare and educational infrastructures have been grappling to absorb skyrocketing demands, causing a decline in their quality and provision (SFCG, 2014). Demographic data published by the UNHCR shows that the majority of the refugee population is younger than 17 years of age (UNHCR 2014). According to a UNHCR and REACH study on Barriers to Education for Syrian Refugee Children in Lebanon (2014) the number of school-aged Syrian children is now over 400,000. As a result of support from the Ministries of Education and Higher Education (MEHE) as well as from humanitarian organizations, 90,000 Syrian refugee children between the ages of 5 and 17 were enrolled in public schools in 2013/2014. More than 30,000 of them were enrolled in a second shift program that delivers a lighter certified curriculum in Arabic for Syrian students who were not able to enroll in the first shift. Despite these achievements and the availability of non-formal education, more than 50% of Syrian refugee children are not enrolled in any form of education; however, the UNHCR does not

have any definitive numbers.

In addition to health and education, the situations of overcrowding have overloaded already-outdated infrastructures, which has resulted in an increase in sub-standard living conditions for both refugee and local communities (SFCG 2014). The decline in access to and quality of public services around Lebanon has been considered a major issue in the past few years, causing significant drops in living conditions. This has exacerbated socioeconomic and social tensions, compounding the urgent responsibilities of local and international institutions.

4.1.4. Variable #4 – Housing

Access to housing presents another variable impacting the refugee crisis and its relief response. Lack of affordable housing leads to refugees living in substandard, overcrowded and unsuitable accommodations without security of tenure, exposed to risks of exploitation, and forced eviction. This increases the burden of the institutions involved in providing the refugees with aid. However, governments with active policies that insure the constant production of affordable housing, the protection of refugees' right to access these houses, and the regulation of inflated real-estate values, are less prone to deal with extensive cases of substandard living conditions. Furthermore, host governments that sanctioned the construction of official camps for refugees have been alleviating the demand for housing and minimizing problem of squatting on public and private property.

The Lebanese government's refusal to sanction the formation of official camps, in fear that they would become permanent as the case of the Palestinians, has intensified the refugees' demand for affordable housing. According to a 2013 World Bank assessment report on the economic and social impact of the Syrian refugee crisis: "Lebanon has been facing a housing crisis for the past three decades," a problem which has been exacerbated by the additional 1.2 million refugees in need of housing and shelter (World Bank, 2013, 116). This rise in housing demand has caused a shortage in the supply of affordable housing units, mainly in Beirut and Tripoli (UNHCR 2014).

Reluctance to generate affordable housing has been fostered by a market environment already drenched with expensive properties, the result of unregulated real estate speculation and the absence of incentives for affordable housing policies. So far, government-housing policies have played an inadequate role in delivering affordable land and housing options, let alone in regulating the housing market (UNHCR 2014). As a result, more than 40% of Syrian refugees can no longer afford to live in rented apartments. Instead, they have pursued other types of accommodation, such as group shelters, formal or informal tented camp settlements, garages, shops, unfinished houses or structures, and worksites (UNHCR, 2014). This poses another risk of increased informal and sub-standard living conditions that could potentially unravel into a wide range of health, environmental, urban, and legislative problems in terms of squatting, ownerships, and property rights.

4.1.5. Variable #5 – General Security Environment

The rise of Syrian-influenced Islamic radicalism has been a common concern among the host governments including Iraq, Lebanon, and Jordan. Those countries hosting refugees of the Syrian civil war are entangled in their own religious and political complexities, and are extremely sensitive to any threat to their internal balance of power. Therefore, host governments are primarily concerned with managing and protecting their own national security. The stability (or lack thereof) of a state's national security influences its perception, policy, and response towards the refugees' presence and needs. This variable of the operating environment directly impacts efforts toward social cohesion and integration between the refugee and host communities.

The continued Syrian refugee influx, coupled with their increasing socio-economic marginalization and the involvement of Lebanese political factions in the neighboring civil war, has caused a rise in religious and political extremism within the refugee community. In the past year Lebanese cities have suffered bomb attacks orchestrated by Syrian members of the terrorist organization known as ISIS (the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria) in response to the military involvement of Lebanese parties in the Syrian war. This presents an overarching problem with negative implications on any prospective conflict resolution mechanisms, communal interaction initiatives, or integrative policies of local governments. Damaged trust between the two communities, alongside the specter of terrorism, could erode efforts toward social cohesion and stability. However, this variable differs across different cities in Lebanon. Regions or cities, where local governments and NGOs are more active in their response and have a strong sense of legitimacy among the communities they serve, present a more stable security status than other areas.

4.1.6. Variable #6 – Policing

Theoretically, formal legislation concerning refugee legal status and their protections under law would produce reliable outcomes in terms of refugee treatment on the street. However, police and military are institutions whose behavior can diverge from formal policy, as well as from popular sentiment. (Social capital, which can generate cohesive traits, may or may not extend to the behavior of military or police personnel.) Given such divergence, Policing is a variable distinct from both Legislation and Social Capital.

Policing can be understood both quantitatively and qualitatively – that is, the amount of resources devoted to policing certain areas and communities, and the type of tactics and methods employed in that policing.

In Lebanon, local municipalities and regional General Security offices are in charge of policing their own jurisdictions. With the rising socio-political tensions between the Syrian and Lebanese communities, and violence shaking Lebanon's national security, municipalities have increased police work in order to maintain security within their jurisdictions. However, in security operations and conflict resolution initiatives, local governments have sometimes violated refugees' human rights (SFCG, 2014). Most municipalities have started imposing restrictions on refugee mobility and self-policing, and have introduced nightly curfews and security checkpoints targeting Syrians. This practice started in the South but has now spread to almost all municipalities in Lebanon (UNHCR, 2014).

4.1.7. Variable #7 – Social Capital

Social capitals of different operating environments vary partly in relation to host communities' perceptions of and sentiments towards the refugee communities. These perceptions and sentiments directly impact social cohesion between the host and refugee communities and the willingness of the former to accommodate the needs and presence of the latter. As such, regions that have experienced physical violence and threats to their security from Syrian Islamic insurgents present higher rates of social tensions, such as in the cities of Arsal and Tripoli in the North of Lebanon (REACH and UNHCR 2014).

Local governments are facing obstacles to social integration between Lebanese and Syrian communities. At the outset of the crisis, some host communities expressed their sympathies toward refugees by welcoming and supporting them, sometimes free of charge. However, supporting refugees progressively became an unsustainable burden on both host communities and public authorities (UNHCR, 2014). Declining economic and security conditions, constraints on services, substandard living conditions, deteriorating infrastructure, entangled Lebanese and Syrian politics, and memories of the Syrian military presence in Lebanon have resulted in diminished social integration of refugees within Lebanese communities. This in turn leads to decreased sympathies within host communities and boosted violent incidents against Syrian refugees (SFCG, 2014).

Social capital also varies according to the level of cultural and religious homogeneity of the different communities and institutions involved in the crisis. In the case of Lebanon, this has manifested in the rise of Islamic aid organizations and donors, whose humanitarian incentives are directly related to the religious, Islamic, homogeneity of the Syrian refugees and most of their host communities.

4.1.8. Variable #8 – Transnational Aid

Transnational aid is one of the main funding sources for local and international aid organizations operating in Lebanon. Lebanon's UNHCR appeal for donations is more than three times that of Turkey, although the latter has a larger refugee population than the former. As opposed to Lebanon, the Turkish government is directly involved in the Syrian relief operations through its Disaster and Emergency Management agency (2014 Syria Regional Response Plan, Turkey). Therefore, it is important to understand the nature, sourcing, and administration of this transnational aid and how it varies throughout Lebanon.

The Syrian refugees in Lebanon are benefiting from donor organizations and funds from both the West, including the United States and Europe, and the Arab/ Islamic World, including Kuwait, Qatar, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, etc. These donors have different humanitarian ideologies, incentives, political interests, financing sources, and administrative frameworks. However, in the case of Lebanon they both serve as the main source of financial relief, as the government lacks the economic capacity to carry this burden.

This variable is directly related to the eligibility of the Syrian refugees in Lebanon for transnational aid, be it Western or Islamic. The Western, more secular, donors and international aid organizations are bound by the Refugee Convention's definition and categorization of refugees. As for the Islamic donors and NGOs, their perception of eligibility is based on the Islamic identity and homogeneity of the Syrian refugees in Lebanon.

4.2. Dimensions Measuring The Variables Of Saida's Operating Environment

Each of the framework's variables consists of dimensions, which in turn are measurable along a spectrum between "very low" to "very high". This structure enables a clearer perspective on the significance of specific variables and the interrelations between their dimensions. Furthermore, it presents a tangible assessment of Saida's relief framework, and its specific strengths and weaknesses,

The low-high spectrum does not intend to assign a value judgment to the measurement of dimensions. In order to make the model more digestible and consistent, each dimension has been conceptualized so that "high" levels correspond to a liberalized environment for refugees and inhabitants. The weakening or strengthening of any dimension could have a range of positive and negative effects, a dynamic explored in the Recommendations section.

Such a model could be elaborated upon, employing statistical techniques toward predicting how improvements or deteriorations to any given variable might dynamically impact the operating environment. This unmathematical approach is nevertheless important toward developing a framework that can be used to justify recommendations to actors for optimizing and expanding aid coordination, procurement, and distribution in Saida.

4.2.1. Variable # 1: Legislation

Legislation Dimension – Legal Recognition of Refugees

Current Valuation: Very low

Lebanese Law does not define the term refugee, nor does it grant them rights to governmental assistance or legal representation. In official documents and media conferences, governments refer to the Syrian refugees as "migrants".

Legislation Dimension #1 – Employment Rights

Current Valuation: Moderately low

Syrian refugees are allowed to hold legal jobs if they have a work visa or permit. The cost of processing and receiving these legal documents is too high for most refugees or potential employers to afford. Permits can cost up to \$1,000 dollars and require a deposit and Lebanese sponsor. However, many refugees work illegally, mainly in labor-intensive or service jobs that pay very little (between 200 and 400 USD per month).

Legislation Dimension #2 – Eventual Residency or Naturalization Rights

Current Valuation: Very low

Lebanese law does not afford a separate or preferred legal status to foreigners who have resided in Lebanon for more than three years, no matter the circumstance of their residency or relocation to the country.

Legislation Dimension #3 – Entry Requirements

Current Valuation: Slightly low

The central government has enforced new visa restrictions, prohibiting the free-flow of refugees into Lebanon. Lebanese border control is uneven and relatively weak; therefore, and a lot of refugees still cross over undetected.

Legislation Dimension #4 – Internal Mobility

Current Valuation: Moderately high

Saida's local authorities have not enforced any curfews or checkpoints restricting the refugees' mobility. The local NGOs actively lobbied for free mobility, considering that it widens their work and income opportunities,

and maintains higher levels of social cohesion.

Legislation Dimension #5 – Internal mobility

Current Valuation: Moderately high

Saida's local authorities have not enforced any curfews or checkpoints restricting the refugees' mobility. The local NGOs actively lobbied for free mobility, considering that it widens their work and income opportunities, and maintains higher levels of social cohesion.

Legislation Dimension #6 – External Mobility

Current Valuation: Very low

The government does not issue travel documents to refugees.

4.2.2. Variable #2: Economy

Economy Dimension #1 – Job Market

Current Valuation: Moderately low

The unemployment rate in Saida is almost double the national rate (15% versus 7.9%). Its labor force participation rate is also lower than the national level. Therefore, Saida's job market is underperforming.

Economy Dimension #2 – National Budget

Current Valuation: Moderately low

The Lebanese government is operating on a total national reserve of 47.8 billion USD (World Bank 2013) and a public debt equal to 138% of its total GDP (Lebanese Ministry of Finance 2014). Also, Lebanon ranks 136th out of 175 countries on the 2014 Corruption Perception Index, which measures the perceived levels of public sector corruption worldwide. According to Transparency International, a low ranking usually signifies widespread bribery and lack of punishment for corruption. This is exacerbated by the various political or religious confessions' monopolies over different sectors of the Lebanese economy.

4.2.3. Variable #3: Public Services

Public Services Dimension #1 – Security Resources

Current Valuation: Moderately high

Saida's security status has been more stable than other regions. The city's general security forces, municipality, and local NGOs have been cooperating together at maintaining a stable and secure environment.

Public Services Dimension #2 – Education

Current Valuation: Moderately low

The Lebanese Ministry of Education, funded by the UNHCR, is the main entity involved in organizing and administering the service of education to the Syrian refugee population in Lebanon. In 2014, more than 90,000 Syrian refugee children between the ages of 5 and 17 were enrolled in public schools. However, more than 50% of the 400,000 Syrian refugee children are not enrolled in any form of education. There are no clear numbers on the level of enrollment in Saida; however, according to the city's officials, it appears to follow the national average.

Public Services Dimension #3 – Healthcare

Current Valuation: Slightly high

Saida has a number of free clinics run by local NGOs. The UNHCR is also a main provider of healthcare in the city. These institutions provide refugees with free meds and consultations, and they subsidize large percentages of hospitalization costs.

One complex aspect is the issue of refugee birthrates. As shown by the case study, Saida is a family-centric environment. This implies the desire to reproduce. However, sometimes abortion may be desired although it is illegal in Lebanon, unless directly life threatening to the mother or the baby. From the government's perspective, abortion is a double-edged sword. On one end, any policy allowing abortion would risk discrediting the government according to religious dogma. On the other hand, providing more tools for the self-management of reproduction rates in the refugee communities is preferable. This issue is underexplored in the literature and deserves further study.

Public Services Dimension #4 – Public transportation

Current Valuation: Moderately low

There is no mass public transportation system in Lebanon or Saida. Most of the refugees rely on shared taxis and mini vans to travel around. The cost of one trip ranges between 0.66 and 1.5 USD. My fieldwork interviews revealed that the refugees' monthly transportation costs amount to about 13 to 18% of their monthly incomes.

Public Services Dimension #5 – Infrastructure (water, electricity, sewage)

Current Valuation: Moderately low

The refugees and Lebanese residents of some neighborhoods in Saida (especially in the Historic District) often suffer from water shortages, electricity outages (an average of 6 hours a day), and sewage overflows.

4.2.4. Variable #4: Housing

Housing Dimension #1 – Affordability

Current Valuation: Moderately low

Land prices in Saida range between 300 and 2500 USD per m². Certain neighborhoods including the Historic district, Aln El Helwe, and Miyeh w Miyeh are more affordable than others. That is also due to their less undesirable security status and the quality of their housing and infrastructural services. The decrease in affordable housing simultaneously affects the quality of housing accessible to refugees and lower income Lebanese populations.

Housing Dimension #2 – Livability

Current Valuation: Moderately low

UNHCR housing reports show that more than 40% of refugees currently occupy inadequate shelter. Saida's Historic District presents inadequate infrastructure and apartment structures. Refugees were living in overcrowded conditions with bad insulation and leaking roof structures. In Hay el Barrad the refugees could only afford to live in the ground floor spaces of buildings, which were originally intended for retail or storage.

Housing Dimension #3 – Campsites

Current Valuation: Moderately low

The Lebanese Government refuses to sanction official campsites in fear that they would become permanent and unmanageable. However, there are a number of unofficial Syrian refugee camps around Lebanon that are managed by international organizations. In Saida, there are no Syrian refugee camps.

4.2.5. Variable #5: General Security Environment

General Security Dimension #1 – Shielding from Regional and Internal Turmoil

Current Valuation: Moderately low

Lebanon's exposure to the Syrian conflict is automatic since it is a bordering country. However, involvement in the conflict is a decision that has been made (for better or for worse) by Hizballah, a Lebanese political party. One focus of policy toward the Syrian crisis is making sure it does not result in open war between Lebanon and

Syria. Another focus is preventing the dynamics of the Syrian war from spilling over into Lebanon. This could entail Lebanon being used as a battleground for Syrian factions, or instigate Lebanese intersectorian conflict, which has been a consistent threat breaking out almost every year in different regions around the country. Meanwhile, Lebanon remains concerned about the prospect of open war with its southern neighbor, Israel. Israel and Lebanon experience regular skirmishes on the Southern border, most recently in January 2015. The last major war between the two was in the summer of 2006, which resulted in major internal displacement and infrastructural damage.

General Security Dimension #2 – Management of Radicalism

Current Valuation: Neutral

Moderate efforts are being made through coordination between Lebanese internal security and traditionally competitive sects, along with Western intelligence services. Despite this, the prospect for radical behavior remains a high risk. Two years ago there was an outbreak of violence in Saida between two local Lebanese militias. However, there have been no incidents of violence with extremist Syrian militias in the city.

General Security Dimension #3 – Border Security

Current Valuation: Moderately low

There are strict visa categories restricting Syrian refugees' legal access into the country. However, the Bekaa region of Lebanon, which borders Syria, is loosely government and policed. This allows for a lot of displaced Syrians and militants to enter the country undetected.

4.2.6. Variable #6: Policing

Policing Dimension #1 – Permitting Refugee Mobility

Current Valuation: Moderately high

The authorities of Saida and its local NGOs have not enforced any curfews or checkpoints restricting the Syrian refugees' mobility.

Policing Dimension #2 – Humane Treatment by Police Forces

Current Valuation: Moderately high

There have been no signs of brutality and violence in Saida's police tactics so far

Policing Dimension #3 – Access to Legal Entitlements

Current Valuation: Slightly low.

According to the Lebanese law, Syrian refugees have no legal right to a state appointed attorney. Their right to due process is unclear and often violated. Most of their legal representation is provided by UNHCR or other international aid organizations.

4.2.7. Variable #7: Social Capital

Social Capital Dimension #1 – Local Perception of Privation

Current Valuation: Slightly high

Lebanese residents and officials of Saida perceive the Syrian refugees as people in need of humanitarian assistance.

Social Capital Dimension #2 – Family Cohesion

Current Valuation: Moderately high

The average household size in Saida is 4 to 5 people. Most families in the city have conservative values. The community is very paternal, only 14% of women worked in 2004. In the traditional religious context of Saida,

family cohesion fosters social stability, which results in better security, predictability of operating environment.

Social Capital Dimension #3 – Mutual Identification (religious identification, racial and linguistic identification, gender identification, sexual identification, non-demographic identifications, etc.)

Current Valuation: Slightly high

Mutual identification between the Lebanese host and Syrian refugee populations consists of religious identification as Muslim Sunnis, racial–linguistic identification as Levantine Arabs, and sexual identification in line with hetero-normative sexual expectations. However, there is a very low basis for identification in terms of gender, alternative sexualities, alternative religious beliefs, and non-demographic interests (such as sports, literature, fine arts, politics, and professions)

Social Capital Dimension #4 – Cultural Perceptions

Current Valuation: Slightly low

Although Lebanese and Syrian people recognize one another as being of similar heredity and religion, their negative historical experience has deeply tainted mutual cultural perceptions.

Social Capital Dimension #5 – Civic Behavior

Current Valuation: slightly low.

There is a high sense of lawfulness among Saida's Syrian and Lebanese residents; but a low sense of interaction between the two communities.

Social Capital Dimension #6 – Political Participation

Current Valuation: Moderately high

This dimension qualifies political participation as the domain of eligible voters. Reasonably, this is limited to the Lebanese population. In Saida, Lebanese residents vote at a rate higher than 50%. This is higher than the national rate, and it potentiates political representation and reform on behalf of the Syrians.

Social Capital Dimension #7 – Social Institutions

Current Valuation: Neutral

There is an absence of social institutions that grow organically out of participation in local communal activities. For children, educational and recreational institutions provide the majority of social interaction platforms. However, the majority of communal activities amongst the adult population are restricted to arenas of religion, politics, and extended families.

4.2.8. Variable #8: Transnational Aid

Transnational Aid Dimension #1 – Perceptions of Need

Current Valuation: Slightly high

The Western and Arab donors and institutions involved in aid provision perceive the Syrian refugees as needing assistance. They are aware of the continuing conflict and the Lebanese government's lack of regard and resources for the problem. However, there is growing donor fatigue about the Syrian crisis; there is fund solicitation competition from other crises marketing their needs. Western aid organizations perceive the needs of the circumstance from a standardized perspective: they have a convention that generalizes the definition and rights and obligations of refugees. This general definition applies to all human demographics, and needs, which are assigned based on neutral considerations. Islamic organizations have less standardized perceptions of need. The first criterion is that the crisis involves Muslims. Islamic donor organizations formulate their perception of need based upon their trust of information relayed to them by local Islamic NGO and respondents.

Transnational Aid Dimension #2 – Number of Source Options

Current Valuation: Slightly high

The variety of sources is important because depending on one source of funding poses obvious risks. In the case of Saida the UNHCR is a stable aid provider (irrespective of decreases in funds). The government is a stable administrator for national security and education. The municipality is a stable source for certain services (water, electricity, etc.). There are a number of national NGOs that are not considered source options due to some confessional bias. Due to the lack of financial transparency of local NGOs it is unclear the number of transnational Islamic organizations that can be considered as source options. In terms of regional Arab state donors, those with a recent history of involvement in transnational aid include Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Kuwait, and the United Arab Emirates. Western state donors with a history of involvement in transnational aid include United States, France, Britain, Norway, and Denmark. There is a multiplicity of Western styles and aid organizations that are potential sources of direct aid and indirect exposure. The United Nations' Children Fund (UNICEF), Save the Children, the International Rescue Committee, Mercy Corps, Women for Women International, World Vision, and Islamic Relief provide online platforms for personal donations.

Transnational Aid Dimension #3 – Variety of Aid Types

Current Valuation: Slightly low

The majority of aid received by local NGOs is in the form of cash, which they channel into different projects or sectors. UNHCR implements services ranging from shelter subsidies and upgrades, legal representation, food provision, healthcare and education, and infrastructural upgrades. However, the legal aid offered by the UNHCR is not formally institutionalized within the agency's operations. Its accessibility is irregular. These types of aid are lacking in capacity building programs, economic training, and communal integration incentives.

Transnational Aid Dimension #4 – Quantity of Aid

Current Valuation: Neutral

There is enough aid to sustain the status quo. Lebanon has only received 40% of its total UNHCR appeal for 2015. There is not enough to make major progress, but not insignificant enough to cause irreversible deficiencies. Corruption is a major problem in Lebanon, which affects the obtainment of state-level aid. If the donor states cannot trust the governmental distribution of resources then they will continue to depend on other actors. Quid pro quo contingencies are often structured into state-level aid, due to the possibility of strategic and political reciprocation. The possibility for such arrangements with international aid organizations is dubious.

Transnational Aid Dimension #5 – Coordination

Current Valuation: Slightly low

There has been minimal interaction between local NGOs and international organizations or between Arab and international donors. The collaboration and interaction between these different institutions has been informal and inconsistent. There is no official liaison linking their work. Increased bureaucracy can increase official coordination interfaces; however, it simultaneously decreases access. The less institutionalized Islamic aid organizations may not offer consistent interfaces for NGO outreach (depending more upon personal contacts); but given less bureaucracy, they can sometimes be more accessible.

4.3. Secular Humanitarian Aid Model vs. Islamic Humanitarian Aid Model

Saida's case study illustrated the activities of local NGOs, which are inextricable from an essential reliance upon Islamic donor organizations. Meanwhile, the activities of the UNHCR were also shown to be critical to the provision of basic humanitarian aid to Saida's Syrian refugees. The Variable framework with its elaborated Dimensions further engaged the subject of transnational aid, clearly displaying its pivotal role in the upkeep of humanitarian assistance. Despite this pivotal role, the Dimensions of Transnational Aid aspect revealed shortcomings in Saida's engagement of transnational aid resources.

Saida's successes and shortcomings in transnational aid procurement invited the question: What can Saida's NGO coalition do better toward expanding and diversifying its engagement with transnational aid resources? Simultaneously, the coalition is attempting to interface with Western international aid organizations and Islamic humanitarian aid organizations. Yet those two groups have grown out of distinct ideological heritages, which have different mission essences, operational modalities, individual donor bases, and expectations of their beneficiaries.

Given the incoherence of the central government, the sustainment of Saida's aid environment is currently dependent upon both Western and Islamic transnational aid resources. As a result, toward maximizing its funding variety, number of benefactors, and overall funding quantity, Saida's NGO coalition has engaged both Western and Islamic aid organizations. In doing so, the coalition has adopted traits from both traditions. Yet, due to the contingencies of the traditions, Saida will need to navigate its aid benefactor environment very carefully – or risk losing credibility and funding opportunities within both spheres.

Given the critical importance of the Transnational Aid variable to the upkeep and expansion of Saida's worsening humanitarian aid crisis, and building upon the complications described in the Dimensions framework, this study presents dual models, Secular Western Humanitarian Aid and Faith-Based Islamic Humanitarian Aid. This analytical aspect will explore the foundational ideology, organizational structure, financial operation, current vitality, and humanitarian potential of each model. This construction will enable much more sophisticated recommendations to the actors of Saida's operating environment, particularly as the engagement of transnational aid organizations seems so fundamental to the stability and safety of the circumstance.

4.3.1. Western Secular Humanitarian Aid Model

Traditions of charity have particular religious resonances, in both Islam and Christianity. Historically, Western humanitarianism was molded by the Catholic monastic orders that founded hospitals, by the Geneva Calvinist founders of the Red Cross, the Salvation Army, and the Oxford Quakers who helped found Oxfam. Church organizations dominated international aid until the late 1960s, with the founding of the secular agency Médecins Sans Frontières that signified the secularization of Western humanitarianism (Benthall 2013).

Until 1945, the international protection of human rights was confined to treaties abolishing slavery, laws of war, and the minority rights treaties. After World War I and II, a number of authoritative international conventions were held, and documents were signed, including the 1945 United Nations Charter, the 1948 Genocide Convention, the 1950 European Convention on Human Rights, and the 1951 Refugee Convention, which began to form the legal dimensions of the rising Human Rights movement (Igntieff 1999). The end of the 20th century brought about a redistribution of political and conceptual borders. The end of the cold war, the rise of "globalization" and "communication technology", the new power and reach of the human rights movement and its humanitarian interventions, all attest to the rise of a new globe or order, where some border have been eliminated (Keenan 2000). This new borderless reality manifested through the perceptions

of a “global civil society” that is determined to uphold the equal rights of all human beings (Igntieff 1999). In his article comparing Western humanitarianism to its Islamic version, Benthall states that the former is grounded in a set of “universal” principles and a corpus of international law that encapsulates the notion of a shared humanity. Their principles of action are bound to a strict moral code of neutrality, impartiality, and universality (Benthall 2013, 46). In his piece on the Contradictions of Humanitarianism, Brauman associates the universalized sense of humanitarian compassion to the idea that humanity is a “homogenous totality that embodies a fundamental unity” (Brauman 2000).

The 1980s, witnessed an increase in the number of international non-governmental organizations, the majority of which constitute as private charities that derive their funds from official government sources. The international NGOs adopted the role of intermediaries between donor governments and beneficiaries. Governments deliver funds either as part of their international treaty obligations to provide financial support to inter-governmental institutions, or as voluntary state aid that is in line with their domestic and foreign interests (Benthall 2013). The model is therefore susceptible to the interests and political motives of governments and donor organizations, which could affect its pillar of neutrality.

Today, the Western secular humanitarian aid model is characterized by its transparency and accountability that respect the strict rules and audit authorities of donor organizations and donor governments (Benthall 2013). This follows the wave of institutionalization that aimed at universalizing the Western humanitarian aid model. These steps were embraced by the humanitarian sector because they helped the international organizations standardize their methods and expectations, to ease their coordination on the field, and enhance their efficiency. However, the development of standardized templates and guidelines rendered them less flexible in recognizing and responding to particular local needs. This approach also led to a growing corporate culture among the international organizations, with rising concerns of efficiency, promotion, and self-preservation (Barnett 2005). The gaps between the models accountability towards its donors versus towards its aid recipients continue to grow (Irazabal, unpublished manuscript, 2015).

Furthermore, the universalizing discourse of Western aid model risks stripping human beings of their individual identities and reducing them to their collective pain. It makes it possible for humanitarianism to deal with the physiological damages and basic vulnerabilities, without addressing the political, social, cultural, or historical roots of these problems (Brauman 2000).

The secularism of the Western humanitarian model has limited its engagement with religious communities, where faith-based institutions are more popular and have stronger legitimacy than state and international organizations (Barnett 2005). In some regions of conflict, the communities in need perceive international organizations as dominated by an imperialist agenda of Western powers and local elites, posing sophisticated forms of aid that do not fit their immediate needs (Benthall 2013).

An important element of the Western humanitarian aid model lies in its interdependent relationship with the media. In his article on the Disaster-Media-Relief Nexus, Benthall argues that the media representation of disasters has become “a type of consumer commodity”. International Western NGOs, through marketing campaigns, have been building and promoting their “charitable brands” for donors to buy into. Most international NGOs have very distinct and recognizable logos, brand names, and outreach personas, including the UNHCR, the UNDP, Oxfam, Premier Urgence, etc. Visual media has also been at the center of these campaigns (Benthall 2008). The 1984 famine in Ethiopia gave rise to a number of awareness campaigns serving the cause of humanitarian intervention. Some relied on the wide-reaching exposure of mainstream music culture by organizing charity concerts (Singers Without Borders) to promote and fund the crisis. Ultimately, the marketing identity of the crisis was founded by the disturbing and emotional images of starving Ethiopian children promoted by international organizations and the media (Kemedjio 2000). Keenan refers to these media strategies as a way of “mobilizing shame”, which is one tactic the international aid organizations use

to enforce human rights. They are either shaming those committing the human rights violation by exposing them to the public opinion, or shaming the wealthy governments into donating for a cause (Keenan 2004). In 2002, Piers Robinson presented a theory called the CNN Effect, which argues that news media broadcasts of emotionally driven stories of human crisis provoke major responses by domestic audience and political elites in the United States (Bredeson 2011). Although heavily contested for being too simplistic in its approach, the theory validates the existing media-relief nexus and their continuous influence on one another.

In the case of Lebanon, Western aid has been at the forefront of the relief response to the Syrian crisis, providing most of the funds and with more than 60 international organizations operating on the ground. However, the relief approach of some of these international NGOs has been exacerbating the existing community tensions between the Lebanese and Syrian refugees. Perceptions that international NGOs are favoring Syrian communities in their distribution of aid and services have triggered a rise in resentment within Lebanese host communities, who are often equally impoverished (UNHCR, 2014, 18). Also, data presented by the UNHCR and UN-Habitat's report on housing, land and property issues in Lebanon suggests that local Lebanese authorities have been feeling bypassed by international organizations that have provided aid directly to refugees without government coordination. Unsurprisingly, government actors are not pleased to feel their authority and influence weakened within the community (UNHCR, 2014).

4.3.2. Islamic Humanitarian Aid Model

Traditions of charity, both voluntary and obligatory, have existed since the birth of Islam (Petersen 2012, 133). *Zakat* is one of the religion's five pillars. It signifies the obligation to donate 2.5% of one's assets every year to one of eight categories of Muslims in need; such as poor people, orphans, those devoted to spreading Islam and the conversion mission, travelers in need of assistance, Jihad, etc. According to Islamic interpretations, refugees are considered as "travelers in need of assistance" and are therefore eligible for *Zakat* donations. Although it is no longer administered by any modern state, individual Muslims continue to fulfill their yearly obligation. Some personally give their *Zakat* to people they know, who are eligible for receiving it, or by contributing to local *Zakat* committees, mosques, or state funds (Benthall 2013).

Sadaqa on the other hand, is voluntary alms, which Muslims are free to give after they've fulfilled their *Zakat* duties. The *Waqf* is an Islamic institution, which is considered as the equivalent of a Western Donor foundation. The term *Waqf* is also used to signify a property, owned by these Islamic institutions, and is used to provide a public good such as schools, mosques, hospitals, etc. It is also possible to endow a private property to the *Waqf*, while keeping some of the lands benefits to the original owner's family. Another source of Islamic charitable funds comes from Islamic financing. Islamic doctrine prohibits investment companies from using bank interest payments; therefore this money is sometimes remitted to Islamic charities (Benthall 2013).

The rise in Islamic NGOs, providing basic forms of aid, traces back to the early 1980s. This was following a number of wars and disasters in the Muslim world, including the famine in the Horn of Africa, the war in Afghanistan, and the war in Bosnia. These tragedies provoked a sense of solidarity among Muslims, increasing their involvement in humanitarian aid provision. The surge of Islamic aid organizations was partly made possible by the explosion of oil prices in 1979, and the consequent growth in the scale of funds available to the Middle Eastern regimes and donors (Petersen 2012).

Not all Islamic NGOs share identical ideologies, administrations, or operations for providing and seeking aid. Some, like the British Islamic Relief and Muslim Aid, demonstrate a quasi-secular approach by adopting the standards of professionalism and financial accountability of their secular counterparts (Benthall, 2013). These Islamic organizations also provide a small portion of their assistance to non-Muslims, in order to maintain principles of neutrality, impartiality, and universalism without losing their Islamic identity (Petersen 2012).

On the other hand, other organizations, mostly smaller scale local NGOs, present a pervasive organizational religiosity embedded and influencing all aspects of their aid provision. They operate based on a perception that aid and Islam are intimately intertwined, where Muslim practices and discourses are very visible in their administrative structures, operations, collaborations, gender divisions, and populations of concern. In these organizations, the provision of aid is justified and legitimized with reference to Muslim traditions and concepts such as *Zakat* and *Sadaqa*, rather than the Universal Human Rights Declaration, or the League of Nation's Refugee Convention. Promoting aid and religion as being intertwined and inseparable clashes with the secular Western donors' and NGOs' strict understanding of religion and aid as two fundamentally distinct categories (Petersen 2012).

The "cultural proximity" created by the religious homogeneity of the Islamic NGOs and the communities they serve, grants them higher levels of accessibility and trust than their secular counterparts (Benthall 2013). Unlike the secular model's focus on the rights of individuals and on standardization, these Islamic organizations center their work on promoting family values, and creating personal and close interactions with the communities they serve (Petersen 2012). Nonetheless, the absence of a minimum standard of financial transparency and accountability to donors limits their access to larger scale, non-Muslim, donor foundations and governments.

During the Syrian crisis, the Islamic NGOs have been most active in the relief process, in regions more than others. In the city of Saida, my case study, the 27 local NGOs involved in the relief process have an Islamic, specifically Sunni, identity. The city's Lebanese population is more than 80% Muslim Sunni and the majority of its Syrian refugees are as well. Therefore, there is an obvious religious homogeneity and cultural proximity in Saida's aid operating environment.

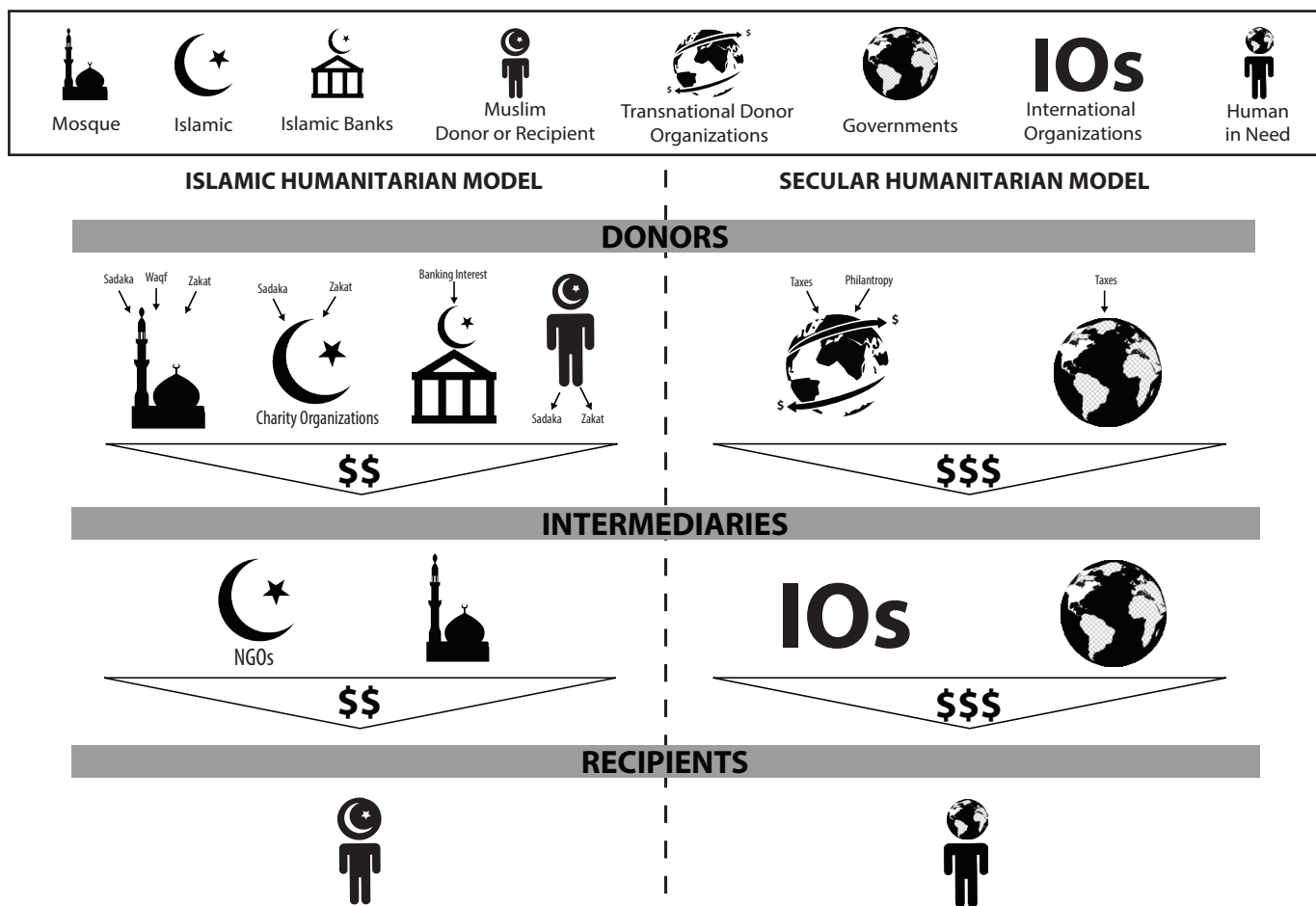


Image 11 - Diagram Comparing the Two Humanitarian Aid Models
Source: Author Illustration (April 2015)

5. Recommendations

The status of the Syrian conflict points to escalation rather than resolution, meaning a prolonged stay for current refugees – and potential increases in refugee inflows. With diminishing aid procurement by the UNHCR, and symptoms of donor fatigue from transnational Islamic organizations, the Saida aid framework demands an immediate correction of course toward sustaining current aid schemes and planning for escalation. This section explores how Saida’s aid practitioners might do that, with an emphasis on the elaboration of current transnational aid procurement strategies.

This specific circumstance demands a long-term framework, not only in terms of aid variety and quantity, but also in terms of a new host paradigm. The recommendations herein urge a transition from the current minimalism in refugee management, which essentially (and imperfectly) seeks to maintain a status quo of the unsteady provision of only the most basic necessities. This paradigm re-conceptualizes the role for Syrians in the elaboration of local societies and economies. Refugee displacement must be regarded not as a crisis for minimalist management, but rather as a positive-sum opportunity for expanded social capital. Optimal management of refugee inflows, from this perspective of functional liberalization, would identify and capitalize opportunities for cultural synthesis, cosmopolitanism, building stronger economies, inter-cultural reconciliation, and for moral benefit.

This study’s recommendations are categorized according to actors and their respective roles in strategically bolstering Dimensions as outlined in the Analytic Framework. Each recommendation entails potential positive and negative externalities following implementation.

5.1. Recommendations for the Lebanese Central Government

Central Government 1 – Legal Recognition of Refugees

Accede to 1951 Refugee Convention's definition of refugees and their eligibility for services and aid.

- Positive Externalities:

Granting refugees right to asylum, public services, and humanitarian aid could potentially better their living conditions and lessen their economic, social, and political marginalization.

- Negative Externalities:

A host country like Lebanon, entangled in its own economic deficiencies and socio-political fragmentation, could suffer negatively from an increase in the government's legal obligations towards these refugees.

Central Government 2 – Employment Rights and Job Market

The government should accede by the Refugee Convention's provision, which states that host governments should provide refugees with the right to seek employment and income. The government should increase the Syrian refugees' access to jobs, either by reducing the cost of work permits and visas, or by developing a labor-intensive sector of the economy to absorb the growing Syrian population in need of a steady income. As for a long-term approach, the government should focus on educating and training Syrian refugees toward the expansion sophistication of current economic modalities.

- Positive Externalities:

New economic sectors can be generated based on the skills and cultural characteristics of refugees. If the economy is performing positively, then there is less likely to be a negative social bias in cultural perceptions against the Syrian refugees. The host government and communities would perceive them as useful and desirable, which would raise their social capital and increase social cohesion.

- Negative Externalities:

If the government doesn't expand the economy to absorb the refugee workforce, then facilitating their access to work opportunities would increase the competitiveness of the job market. This would negatively impact wages and employment rates. Lebanese people's perception of Syrians as being the reason behind economic decline would risk a decrease in social cohesion and could result in civic unrest.

Central Government 3 – Eventual Residency or Naturalization Rights

Institute a law that provides resident rights to those who cannot go back to their country of origin due to ongoing war, after a period of time.

- Positive Externalities:

This could provide better chances for economic and social integration between the host and refugee communities. It would decrease the latter's fear of deportation, fines, or imprisonment; and it would increase their chances for Political Participation.

- Negative Externalities:

The dominant Muslim Sunni identity of the Syrians could tip the confessional balance of Lebanon. It would potentially destabilize political and social environment. Not to mention that Lebanon's Infrastructure and Economy are not equipped to absorb such an increase to the nation's permanent population.

Central Government 4 – Entry Requirements and Border Security

Given Lebanon's proximity to a theater of open war, security is paramount. If Lebanese internal security is well resourced (and with the coordination of Western intelligence services) it may be possible for Lebanon to vet refugees according to their individual risk factor. In this ideal circumstance, combatants and criminals would be denied entry whereas the admittance of vetted refugees would be liberalized as much as possible. In line with the Refugee Convention's stand concerning the refugees' right to non-refoulement, this study asserts that refugees from war zones must be allowed entry despite economic and infrastructural limitations. Nonetheless, the government should also seek to tighten their security on the borders to prevent militants from slipping through undetected.

- Positive Externalities:

This would help guarantee the life, dignity, and rights of at risk populations trying to escape the war in Syria. It would allow extended refugee families to reunite, which could potentially increase Family Cohesion and raise the Social Capital of Lebanon's operating environment.

- Negative Externalities:

Allowing almost unrestricted flow of refugees makes it difficult to control the population growth, which would potentially drain the national Economy and Transnational Aid funds.

Central Government 5 – External Mobility

The government should accede to the 1951 Refugee Convention's provision about the host country's obligation to issue refugees identification cards and travel documents, which would allow them to seek family and work opportunities abroad. If Lebanese internal security is well resourced it may be possible for Lebanon to vet refugees according to their individual risk factor. In this ideal circumstance, combatants and criminals would be denied access to travel documents, whereas the External Mobility of vetted refugees would be liberalized as much as possible.

- Positive Externalities:

If the Syrian refugees could travel, other countries might share the refugee burden. Other countries might offer them better living standards and they could afford political refugees access to representation or political agency. If allowed to seek job opportunities in other countries, the Lebanese government could potentially benefit from increased foreign remittances from refugee abroad to their families in Lebanon.

- Negative Externalities:

This could open up risks of transporting war criminals to other host countries and increasing their mobility between Lebanon and Syria.

Central Government 6 – Access to Legal Entitlements

The government should accede by the Refugee Conventions provision of the host state's obligation to provide refugees with indiscriminative access to judiciary courts and legal proceedings. They should sanction the refugees' right to legal representation and equal access to Lebanese courts.

- Positive Externalities:

This could potentially decrease the injustices committed against refugees. They are less likely to be taken advantage of. These recommendations would help lessen the perceived injustice towards refugees and could potentially raise the latter's respect toward the state.

Central Government 7 – National Budget

The government should institute more tools for corruption monitoring. It should actively seek policies to

reduce corruption. The government should also dissolve the confessional and sectarian fragmentation of the Lebanese Economy. They should collaborate with the UNHCR to help them distribute their aid and incentivize them to focus on infrastructural upgrades that would benefit both refugees and national citizens.

- Positive Externalities:

National budget can benefit, directly and indirectly, from humanitarian relief fund and projects. Directly, through monetary funds and indirectly, from service upgrades and assistance. Pervasive anti-corruption strategies could potentially improve the national budget, which would reflect positively on the country's stability and potentially help increase the refugees' living conditions.

- Negative Externalities:

True political reform would not be welcome by most of the people controlling the government and its resources. If they perceive refugees as a threat to the status quo, they will probably take action towards kicking them out.

Central Government 8 – Education

The government should accede by the Refugee Convention and its obligations to provide free Education to refugees. The Ministry of Education, with the guidance of the UNHCR, should consider setting up temporary school structures in regions around the country, and employing Syrian teachers from the refugee communities. They should give them basic training and familiarize them with the Syrian curriculum that they set up. They should also get the teachers' feedback on the curriculum and consider revising it to better fit the needs of the Syrian students.

- Positive Externalities:

This would lessen the burden of existing educational services that are overloaded. Better education would increase the possibilities of long-term economic integration of refugees. Generally, increased education decreases the likelihood of criminal behavior in youths. Education can also create more platforms for social integration between the two communities, which would decrease biased Cultural Perceptions. Having their kids enrolled in school can also provide parents with space for employment.

- Negative Externalities:

Without Transnational Aid, these recommendations would drain public education funds. If not administered fairly, and if it overshadows the national educational sector, this program could create envy between local population and refugee population.

Central Government 9 – Healthcare

The government should accede by the Refugee Convention and its obligations to provide free healthcare to refugees. The government should maintain the access of foreign Healthcare services and workers. The Ministry of Health should continue devoting inspection and regulatory services to maintain food safety and improve water safety, which would minimize health risks.

- Positive Externalities:

This would help keep the refugee population disease-free. Permanent improvements to Lebanon's Healthcare infrastructure could decrease negative cultural attitudes resulting from perceptions of favoritism between the two communities. This could potentially increase the refugees' living standard.

- Negative Externalities:

If the government does not receive enough Transnational Aid, Healthcare needs could overload the service's existing infrastructure and decrease its overall quality.

Central Government 10 – Public Transport

They should develop the national Public Transportation services, at least those connecting major cities together.

- Positive Externalities:

This would diversify and increase the refugees' work opportunities. Given that transportation is a major cost for them, any relief on that end would enable them to spend money on other things they need. This could potentially increase their overall Social Capital.

Central Government 11 – Infrastructure

Lobby for international aid organizations to invest aid funds into developing and ameliorating the Lebanon and Saida's utilities Infrastructure and expanding their capacities.

- Positive Externalities:

This would increase the refugee and host communities' standard of living, and it would also increase the state's popularity and legitimacy. By servicing both Lebanese and Syrian refugee communities, this could help increase social cohesion and it could favor Cultural Perceptions of the latter's presence among the former. Also, it could potentially increase civic pride and Civic Behavior among Saida's residents.

Central Government 12 – Housing Affordability

They should sanction policies controlling the inflation of rent prices through regulating real-estate speculation, which is triggered by the increased demand on Housing.

- Positive Externalities:

These recommendations would help increase access to affordable shelter and tenure security. There would be less homeless people and less people living in substandard conditions.

Central Government 13 – Housing Livability

The government should issue federal regulations to enforce building safety and enhance public utility access. Property owners, who don't apply these regulations, should be fined.

- Positive Externalities:

This would increase the refugees' living conditions by lessening some of their hygiene and sanitation problems.

Central Government 14 – Campsites

The government should locate and sanction Campsites close to the Syrian-Lebanese borders, which would provide more shelter options for refugees while remaining close enough to the border for them to leave when the war ends.

- Positive Externalities:

If the war devolves further, and refugee flows into Lebanon increase, then officially sanctioned Campsites could be vital, especially in summer months, toward absorbing sudden population inflows that are beyond the current infrastructural capacity.

- Negatives Externalities:

Officially sanctioned Campsites could risk having temporary setups turn into ill-planned long-term settlements – such as the case of the Palestinian refugee camps. Also, camps are inevitable sites of social and economic exclusion. As such, they degrade social integration, diminish opportunities for Social Capital, and reduce economic integration and self-sustainability amongst encamped refugee

populations.

Central Government 15 – Shielding from Regional and Internal Turmoil

The government should seek to maintain a strategy toward other states that minimizes the risk of Lebanon's involvement in international war. It should carefully manage relationships with the Western states, which could help insure this. The government should also promote internal power-sharing frameworks that safeguard against inter-sectarian conflict.

- Positive Externalities:

These policies would potentially encourage regional peace and constructive attitudes amongst the population. With a peace of mind, locals can focus on producing social and economic capital.

- Negative Externalities:

Taking passive military or cultural posture poses some vulnerability. Current covert involvement in Syrian civil war could risk provocation of insurgent or state military forces.

Central Government 16 – Local Perception of Privation

The government should increase awareness campaigns and education encouraging compassion and tolerance toward refugees.

- Positive Externalities:

This would potentially increased mutual identification between host and refugee communities, improve their Cultural Perceptions of each other, and increase Civic Behavior.

- Negative Externalities:

Focusin on needs and suffering could increase perceptions of victimhood amongst the refugee and those assisting them, which can inhibit initiatives for personal and community agency.

Central Government 17 – Civic Behavior

The government should follow a flexible visa policy that keeps families together. They should also use Education as a tool to maintain lawful environment

- Positive Externalities:

Lawful people are more predictable and easier to socially and economically integrate into host communities. This would potentially create gradual positive intercultural perceptions between Syrians and Lebanese populations.

- Negative Externalities:

People might become more concerned with being lawful than speaking up for their rights. Fear of losing their resident status could be a negative externality of the status quo. This dimension requires further investigation to understand where its current valuation is rooted.

Central Government 18 – Perceptions of Need and Number of Source Options

The government should use its access to other states and large donor organizations in order to relay the initiatives of local NGOs, toward building recognition and awareness of refugees' privations and specific needs.

- Positive Externalities:

This could increase local NGOs' access to Transnational Aid funds.

- Negative Externalities:

With Lebanon's high corruption rate, there is a high risk of misappropriation of aid funds.

Central Government 19 – Variety of Aid Types

The government should consider supporting economic schemes that would help Syrians become self-sufficient and contribute to local Economy. They would do this by recognizing the power of international organizations offering micro loan services. Syrian refugees should be allowed to participate in this international microloan framework, which ideologically favors economic development and eventual self-sufficiency through small business creation over repeated superficial aid injections. The government may enable the refugees' participation in the microfinance framework by providing them with a legal status that permits them to start businesses.

- Positive Externalities:

This would eventually decrease their economic dependency on humanitarian aid assistance. This study's fieldwork has already described Syrians as boasting a distinct work ethic: they work with a great attitude for long hours. Beyond these traits, there are likely to be specific cultural mentalities that could translate to innovate businesses, products and services. In this way, liberalizing the participation of refugees in the local economy could lead to innovations and synergies that could permanently bolster local and national economies.

- Negative Externalities:

Unregulated fiscal inflows could pose security risks. Also, increased economic stake could incentivize the refugees to stay in Lebanon permanently, which could be unpalatable for the host infrastructure and political stability. These strategies, if not regulated properly, could increase the economic competition for local businesses.

Central Government 20 – Coordination

The government should assign an official liaison office to coordinate Transnational Aid with the work of local NGOs.

- Positive Externalities:

More coordination would likely result in increased funding sources and quantities, especially from large donors reluctant to provide funds to the corrupt and inefficient Lebanese governmental agencies.

- Negative Externalities:

The state is marginalizing itself as provider of resources within its territory and limiting opportunities to build relationships with and profit from quid pro quo arrangements with outside states and organizations.

5.2. Recommendations for Saida's Municipality

Municipality 1 – Employment Rights and Job Market

The municipality can play an integral part in administering or mediating the government's plan to educate and train the refugees by organizing capacity building and vocational workshops.

- Positive Externalities:

New economic sectors can be generated based on the skills cultural characteristics of refugees. If the Economy is performing positively, then there is less likely to be a negative social bias in Cultural Perceptions against the Syrian refugees. The host government and communities would perceive them as useful and desirable, which would raise their Social Capital and increase social cohesion.

- Negative Externalities:

If the government doesn't expand the Economy to absorb the refugee workforce, then facilitating their access to work opportunities would increase the competitiveness of the Job Market. This would negatively impact wages and employment rates. Lebanese people's perception of Syrians as being the reason behind economic decline would risk a decrease in social cohesion and could result in civic unrest.

Municipality 2 – Internal Mobility and Humane Treatment by Police Forces

The municipality should maintain the current strategies tolerant of refugees' right to Mobility, unless something changes in general security environment, which requires increased control.

They should also maintain their non-violent approach, and increase social sensitivity training of the city's police and security personnel.

- Positive Externalities:

These strategies would help diversify the refugees' employment opportunities to include night jobs or work outside the city. This could help improve their living conditions. These recommendations would potentially increase Social Capital through increasing cohesion, decreasing tensions, and creating amicable relationships between the authorities and the communities they are meant to serve and protect.

- Negative Externalities:

This could decrease security control because criminals originating from the refugee populations become harder to track and capture. It also decreases the predictability of refugees' socio-economic activity, which makes it more challenging for institutions to respond to their specific needs.

Municipality 3 – Security Resources

The municipality should help enhance the city's security services by providing funds to invest in adequately training the city's general security personnel.

- Positive Externalities:

This could potentially decrease chances of violent outbreaks in the city and make the Lebanese and Syrian communities feel safe.

Municipality 4 – Education

They should assist the Central Government and the UNHCR by linking them with the registered refugees in Saida, who have the necessary qualification. They should also locate some public buildings as additional learning centers.

- Positive Externalities:

This would lessen the burden of existing educational services that are overloaded. Better Education would increase the possibilities of long-term economic integration of refugees. Generally, increased Education decreases the likelihood of criminal behavior in youths. Education can also create more platforms for social integration between the two communities, which would decrease biased Cultural Perceptions. Having their kids enrolled in school can also provide parents with space for employment.

- Negative Externalities:

Without transnational aid, these recommendations would drain public Education funds. If not administered fairly, and if it overshadows the national educational sector, this program could create envy between local population and refugee population.

Municipality 5 – Healthcare

The municipality should help coordinate the Healthcare effort of local NGOs and international aid organizations by helping with logistics or using public buildings for medical services. The municipality should also form a medical emergency team that would provide additional services in case of any disease outbreaks.

- Positive Externalities:

This would help keep the refugee population disease-free. Permanent improvements to Lebanon's Healthcare infrastructure could decrease negative cultural attitudes resulting from perceptions of favoritism between the two communities. This could potentially increase the refugees' living standard.

- Negative Externalities:

If the government does not receive enough Transnational Aid, healthcare needs could overload the service's existing infrastructure and decrease its overall quality.

Municipality 6 – Public transportation

They should develop the local Public Transportation services, either a right rail or internal bus route that link the different villages of Greater Saida together, and connect the main administrative business, and retail centers of the city.

- Positive Externalities:

This would diversify and increase the refugees' work opportunities. Given that transportation is a major cost for them, any relief on that end would enable them to spend money on other things they need. This could potentially increase their overall Social Capital.

Municipality 7 – Infrastructure

Lobby for local and international organizations to invest more aid funds into developing and ameliorating the city's utilities Infrastructure and expanding their capacities.

- Positive Externalities:

This would increase the refugee and host communities' standard of living, and it would also increase the state's popularity and legitimacy. By servicing both Lebanese and Syrian refugee communities, this could help increase social cohesion and it could favor Cultural Perceptions of the latter's presence among the former. Also, it could potentially increase civic pride and Civic Behavior among Saida's residents.

Municipality 8 – Housing Affordability

They should local regulation and taxation of real-estate speculation, which is triggered by the increased demand on Housing in the city.

- Positive Externalities:

These recommendations would help increase access to affordable shelter and tenure security. There would be less homeless people and less people living in substandard conditions.

Municipality 9 – Housing Livability

The municipality should increase their restoration budgets and rehabilitation projects. They should enforce a minimum standard of safety and quality on the owners of Housing and apartments units, who are renting their properties out to refugees.

- Positive Externalities:

This would increase the refugees' living conditions by lessening some of their hygiene and sanitation problems.

Municipality 10 – Shielding from Regional and Internal Turmoil

The municipality should build social capital and awareness in ways that minimizes intersectorian conflicts. They should explore strategies for discouraging xenophobia and combative attitudes amongst the population. They should implement social cohesion and integration programs between Lebanese and Syrian refugees, launch awareness campaigns, and increase Education.

- Positive Externalities:

These policies would potentially encourage regional peace and constructive attitudes amongst the population. With a peace of mind, locals can focus on producing social and economic capital.

- Negative Externalities:

Taking passive military or cultural posture poses some vulnerability. Current covert involvement in Syrian civil war could risk provocation of insurgent or state military forces.

Municipality 11 – Management of Radicalism

The municipality and its security forces should implement monitors to remain vigilant about extremist infiltration. They should promote awareness campaigns and social integration programs. They should consider allowing the Syrian refugees to elect their own community representatives, who can help mediate their demands and protect them from negative influences of religious and military extremism.

- Positive Externalities:

If these strategies are properly applied, refugees are less likely to be susceptible to extremist brainwashing. By building social interactions and cohesion between host and refugee communities, the latter are less likely to participate in harming the former and their city.

- Negative Externalities:

Unregulated monitoring by the Lebanese authorities, in the name of security, could infringe on refugees' rights.

Municipality 12 – Local Perception of Privation

They should increase awareness campaigns and education encouraging compassion and tolerance toward refugees.

- Positive Externalities:

This would potentially increased Mutual Identification between host and refugee communities, improve their Cultural Perceptions of each other, and increase Civic Behavior.

- Negative Externalities:

By focusing on their needs and suffering, these strategies could increase perceptions of victimhood amongst the refugee and those assisting them, which can inhibit initiatives for personal and community agency.

Municipality 13 – Family Cohesion

They should provide resources and programs that are family oriented, providing activities and events for kids, youth, and women.

- Positive Externalities:

These recommendations could increase social cohesion, Lawfulness, and Mutual Identification.

- Negative Externalities:

While family cohesion is generally a good thing, Familism – the structural prioritization of family interests over individual interests - is known to limit Civic Behavior and the development of strong Social Institutions.

Municipality 14 – Mutual Identification

They should use Education, awareness campaigns, and workshops to increase appreciation of similarities in lived experience based upon gender, and non-demographic interests.

- Positive Externalities:

This would help increase Social Capital. It would better Cultural Perceptions between Lebanese and Syrian communities.

- Negative Externalities:

Initiatives encouraging non-familial identification risk disrupting the conservative social values of the city's residents, which are based upon family hierarchy.

Municipality 15 – Cultural Perceptions

The municipality should help establish a dialogue between the two communities about their negative historical experiences. They should seek commonalities and focus on them through communal workshops, capacity building initiatives, and activities for kids.

- Positive Externalities:

These strategies would increase social cohesion. They could potentially lead to the reconciliation of deep intercultural wounds

- Negative Externalities:

Probing too deep into one another's perceptions could expose irreconcilable differences about politics and history, which would exacerbate current tensions.

Municipality 16 – Civic Behavior

The municipality should maintain its policing and general security tactics

- Positive Externalities:

Lawful people are more predictable and easier to socially and economically integrate into host communities. This would potentially create gradual positive intercultural perceptions between Syrians and Lebanese populations.

- Negative Externalities:

People might become more concerned with being lawful than speaking up for their rights. Fear of losing their resident status could be a negative externality of the status quo. This dimension requires further investigation to understand where its current valuation is rooted.

Municipality 17 – Political Participation

They should use the high Political Participation rate of Saida's citizen in order to effect pressure on the Central Government and its local policy. That could mutually improve the circumstances of Lebanese and Syrian residents of the city.

- Positive Externalities:

This provides a chance for a democratically mandated reform process that uses the legislative process to raise awareness about social realities.

- Negative Externalities:

There is a risk of negative democratic reactions that would solidify and activate latent negative political perceptions between the two communities.

Municipality 18 – Social Institutions

They should try to create opportunities for social interactions among the city's different communities of residents. From this can grow well-rooted Social Institutions. These institutions should also encourage and identify mutual enjoyment and utility in social activities.

- Positive Externalities:

This would potentially increase social interaction and cohesion between the Lebanese and Syrians

- Negative Externalities:

These strategies, if not implemented with social caution, could raise certain risks of creating or increasing social and communal friction.

Municipality 19 – Perceptions of Need

The municipality should use its partnership with local NGOs to relay the different categories of needs and demands to the Central Government, whose role is to present these issues to state and international donors.

- Positive Externalities:

This can increase the devotion of government resources towards Saida's refugees.

- Negative Externalities:

The more intermediaries there are in trying to get something done, the less efficient it becomes. This risks increasing bureaucratic methods, exploitation and corruption.

Municipality 20 – Quantity of Aid

The municipality can play a role in terms of individual outreach to donors in order to increase aid. It should also increase Coordination with other local municipalities in the absence of Coordination from the national government.

- Positive Externalities:

This would eventually decrease their economic dependency on humanitarian aid assistance. This study's fieldwork has already described Syrians as boasting a distinct work ethic: they work with a great attitude for long hours. Beyond these traits, there are likely to be specific cultural mentalities that could

translate to innovate businesses, products and services. In this way, liberalizing the participation of refugees in the local Economy could lead to innovations and synergies that could permanently bolster local and national economies.

- Negative Externalities:

Unregulated fiscal inflows could pose security risks. Also, increased economic stake could incentivize the refugees to stay in Lebanon permanently, which could be unpalatable for the host Infrastructure and political stability. These strategies, if not regulated properly, could increase the economic competition for local businesses.

Municipality 21 – Coordination

It should position itself as impartial, credible, mediator between local NGOs, the Central Government, and transnational donor organizations.

- Positive Externalities:

This could help increase funding sources, quantity, transparency, and credibility of process.

- Negative Externalities:

Increasing the number of mediators in the aid acquisition-delivery process, leads to risks of inefficiency and subterfuge.

5.3. Recommendations for the UNHCR

UNHCR 1 – Eventual Residency or Naturalization Rights

Lobby toward increasing the refugees' Eventual Residency Rights. Apply pressure on the Lebanese government to amend some of its laws towards refugees.

- Positive Externalities:

This could provide better chances for economic and social integration between the host and refugee communities. It would decrease the latter's fear of deportation, fines, or imprisonment; and it would increase their chances for Political Participation.

- Negative Externalities:

The dominant Muslim Sunni identity of the Syrians could tip the confessional balance of Lebanon. It would potentially destabilize political and social environment. Not to mention that Lebanon's Infrastructure and Economy are not equipped to absorb such an increase to the nation's permanent population.

UNHCR 2 – External Mobility

Allow selective access to their data by Lebanese Internal Security toward vetting refugees for criminality, or involvement with warfare.

- Positive Externalities:

If the Syrian refugees could travel, other countries might share the refugee burden. Other countries might offer them better living standards and they could afford political refugees access to representation or political agency. If allowed to seek job opportunities in other countries, the Lebanese government could potentially benefit from increased foreign remittances from refugee abroad to their families in Lebanon.

- Negative Externalities:

This could open up risks of transporting war criminals to other host countries and increasing their mobility between Lebanon and Syria.

UNHCR 3 – Education

The UNHCR should guide the Lebanese Ministry of Education in setting up temporary school structures in regions around the country, and employing Syrian teachers from the refugee communities. They should give them basic training and familiarize them with the Syrian curriculum that they set up. The UNHCR should also assist the government in seeking funds to be able to pay the refugees for their work.

- Positive Externalities:

This would lessen the burden of existing educational services that are overloaded. Better Education would increase the possibilities of long-term economic integration of refugees. Generally, increased Education decreases the likelihood of criminal behavior in youths. Education can also create more platforms for social integration between the two communities, which would decrease biased Cultural Perceptions. Having their kids enrolled in school can also provide parents with space for employment.

- Negative Externalities:

Without Transnational Aid, these recommendations would drain public Education funds. If not administered fairly, and if it overshadows the national educational sector, this program could create envy between local population and refugee population.

UNHCR 4 – Healthcare

They should continue providing their current services and lobby for better Healthcare utilities from the Central Government.

- Positive Externalities:

This would help keep the refugee population disease-free. Permanent improvements to Lebanon's Healthcare infrastructure could decrease negative cultural attitudes resulting from perceptions of favoritism between the two communities. This could potentially increase the refugees' living standard.

- Negative Externalities:

If the government does not receive enough Transnational Aid, healthcare needs could overload the service's existing infrastructure and decrease its overall quality.

UNHCR 5 – Infrastructure

Invest aid funds into developing and ameliorating the city's utilities Infrastructure and expanding their capacities.

- Positive Externalities:

This would increase the refugee and host communities' standard of living, and it would also increase the state's popularity and legitimacy. By servicing both Lebanese and Syrian refugee communities, this could help increase social cohesion and it could favor Cultural Perceptions of the latter's presence among the former. Also, it could potentially increase civic pride and Civic Behavior among Saida's residents.

UNHCR 6 – Housing Affordability and Livability

They should increase their budgets for rent subsidies, restoration, and rehabilitation projects. Work on finding affordable and adequate temporary Housing options. They should continue to seek deals with owners of vacant buildings or properties that would entail some kind of benefit in exchange for free-of-charge refugee occupancy for a specific time period.

- Positive Externalities:

These recommendations would help increase access to affordable shelter and tenure security. There would be less homeless people and less people living in substandard conditions.

UNHCR 7 – Shielding from Regional and Internal Turmoil

They should build Social Capital and awareness in ways that minimizes intersectorian conflicts. They should explore strategies for discouraging xenophobia and combative international attitudes amongst the population. They should implement social cohesion and integration programs between Lebanese and Syrian refugees, launch awareness campaigns, and increase Education.

- Positive Externalities:

These policies would potentially encourage regional peace and constructive attitudes amongst the population. With a peace of mind, locals can focus on producing social and economic capital.

- Negative Externalities:

Taking passive military or cultural posture poses some vulnerability. Current covert involvement in Syrian civil war could risk provocation of insurgent or state military forces.

UNHCR 8 – Humane Treatment by Police Forces

They should recognize Saida's authorities for their peaceful tactics and encourage others to follow their

methods. They should channel some of their funds for the sensitivity training of the city's security personnel.

- Positive Externalities:

These recommendations would potentially increase Social Capital through increasing cohesion, decreasing tensions, and creating amicable relationships between the authorities and the communities they are meant to serve and protect.

UNHCR 9 – Access to Legal Entitlements

They should set up a more robust legal liaison service, so that unprotected refugees can still have legal recourse.

- Positive Externalities:

This could potentially decrease the injustices committed against refugees. They are less likely to be taken advantage of. These recommendations would help lessen the perceived injustice towards refugees and could potentially raise the latter's respect toward the state.

UNHCR 10 – Family Cohesion

The UNHCR should consider a less individualistic approach in their relief assessment and distribution. They should consider following the family model approach of Islamic aid, which provides a more personal interface that is able to target the specific needs of refugee and host communities.

- Positive Externalities:

These recommendations could increase social cohesion, Lawfulness, and Mutual Identification.

- Negative Externalities:

While family cohesion is generally a good thing, Familism – the structural prioritization of family interests over individual interests - is known to limit Civic Behavior and the development of strong Social Institutions.

UNHCR 11 – Political Participation

The UNHCR can help formulate political platforms and legislation to increase the Political Participation of refugees in a way that can be mutually beneficial to Lebanese and Syrians.

- Positive Externalities:

This provides a chance for a democratically mandated reform process that uses the legislative process to raise awareness about social realities.

- Negative Externalities:

There is a risk of negative democratic reactions that would solidify and activate latent negative Political Perceptions between the two communities.

UNHCR 12 – Social Institutions

They should try to collaborate with local NGOs, or work independently, to create opportunities for social interactions within and between the refugee and Lebanese communities. From this can grow well-rooted Social Institutions, which should also encourage and identify mutual enjoyment and utility in social activities.

- Positive Externalities:

This would potentially increase social interaction and cohesion between the Lebanese and Syrians

- Negative Externalities:

These strategies, if not implemented with social caution, could raise certain risks of creating or increasing social and communal friction.

UNHCR 13 – Perceptions of Need

They should reform their standardized method for categorizing people related to humanitarian crises and interpreting their needs. They should create more personalized methods for assessing the refugees' needs and for operating within different environments and communities.

- Positive Externalities:

This would potentially increase the flexibility and specificity of relief response to refugees' needs. It can also increase the UNHCR's access to religious communities

- Negative Externalities:

Their work becomes more time consuming; refugees' needs become less predictable and harder to assess or respond to. De-standardization increases subjectivity, which can also result in exploitation or corruption.

UNHCR 14 – Number of Source Options and Quantity of Aid

International organizations access donor and voter populations. These donor organizations rely upon promotional material to communicate their needs surrounding any given refugee experience. Because of donor fatigue and solicitor competition these organizations must employ Public Relations (PR) strategies in order to keep themselves and their cause relevant. These strategies depend on new stories, new documentation, and new data. However, many of these organizations do not have teams on the ground equipped to document new or relevant narratives of the refugee experience. The main link between most of these organizations and operational environments is the UNHCR. While the UNHCR may not itself be equipped to document the refugee experience in compelling ways, it does have access to local NGOs and activists, who could be more adept at producing compelling documentation. Therefore, the UNHCR in collaboration with its international aid affiliates should implement a framework that utilizes documentation of local refugee experiences. Knowledge of this framework would compel local activists and NGOs to develop and expand their efforts to document the refugee circumstances and narratives.

- Positive Externalities:

This would potentially increase the local NGOs' access to funds. It would potentially entail more Coordination between the local and international institutions; and would foster a stronger culture of documentation and story telling.

- Negative Externalities:

This presents risks of fetishizing the images and stories about the refugees' suffering. Therefore, this promotional material needs to help people understand the continuous needs of refugees, the urgency of the crisis, and highlight the roots behind the conflict to increase political and popular outrage and pressure on the perpetrators of the war.

UNHCR 15 – Variety of Aid Types

They should expand the scope of aid types they are providing. They should offer more pervasive capacity building programs and social integration incentives. They should institutionalize legal aid for refugees into their work, or partner up with a humanitarian advocacy institution that would take on that task on their behalf.

- Positive Externalities:

This would eventually decrease their economic dependency on humanitarian aid assistance. This study's fieldwork has already described Syrians as boasting a distinct work ethic: they work with a great

attitude for long hours. Beyond these traits, there are likely to be specific cultural mentalities that could translate to innovate businesses, products and services. In this way, liberalizing the participation of refugees in the local Economy could lead to innovations and synergies that could permanently bolster local and national economies.

- Negative Externalities:

Unregulated fiscal inflows could pose security risks. Also, increased economic stake could incentivize the refugees to stay in Lebanon permanently, which could be unpalatable for the host Infrastructure and political stability. These strategies, if not regulated properly, could increase the economic competition for local businesses.

UNHCR 16 – Coordination

They should seek tactics to increase their flexibility to cooperate with small local NGOs. This requires scaling back on some of their protocols that render them too bureaucratic.

- Positive Externalities:

This could increase their legitimacy and access within religious communities, such as those presented in Saida. By relying on some of the untapped resources of Saida's coalition, such as their data, investigative team, in depth knowledge of Saida's operating environment, and their already established personal relationships with the Syrian refugees, the UNHCR could relieve some of its burden of their work in the city.

- Negative Externalities:

This could threaten the transparency and accountability levels that they have achieved so far through their protocols and enhanced professionalism of their operations.

5.4. Recommendations for Saida's Coalition of Local NGOs

Local NGOs 1 – Internal Mobility and Permitting Refugee Mobility

Continue lobby for local authorities to maintain and protect the refugees' rights to Mobility.

- Positive Externalities:

These strategies would help diversify the refugees' employment opportunities to include night jobs or work outside the city. This could help improve their living conditions. These recommendations would potentially increase Social Capital through increasing cohesion, decreasing tensions, and creating amicable relationships between the authorities and the communities they are meant to serve and protect.

- Negative Externalities:

This could decrease security control because criminals originating from the refugee populations become harder to track and capture. It also decreases the predictability of their socio-economic activity, which makes it more challenging for institutions to respond to their specific needs.

Local NGOs 2 – Job market

The local NGOs can play an integral part in the government's plan to educate and train the refugees by organizing and operating capacity building and vocational workshops.

- Positive Externalities:

New economic sectors can be generated based on the skills cultural characteristics of refugees. If the Economy is performing positively, then there is less likely to be a negative social bias in Cultural Perceptions against the Syrian refugees. The host government and communities would perceive them as useful and desirable, which would raise their Social Capital and increase social cohesion.

- Negative Externalities:

If the government doesn't expand the Economy to absorb the refugee workforce, then facilitating their access to work opportunities would increase the competitiveness of the job market. This would negatively impact wages and employment rates. Lebanese people's perception of Syrians as being the reason behind economic decline would risk a decrease in social cohesion and could result in civic unrest.

Local NGOs 3 – Security Resources

They should continue their effective and personal involvement with the refugees. They should seek funds to help enhance the city's security services, such as adequately training its general security personnel.

- Positive Externalities:

This could potentially decrease chances of violent outbreaks in the city and make the Lebanese and Syrian communities feel safe.

Local NGOs 4 – Education

They should assist the central government and the UNHCR by linking them with the registered refugees in Saida, who have the necessary qualification. The local NGOs can easily access this information from their database on the refugees residing in the city.

- Positive Externalities:

This would lessen the burden of existing educational services that are overloaded. Better Education would increase the possibilities of long-term economic integration of refugees. Generally, increased

Education decreases the likelihood of criminal behavior in youths. Education can also create more platforms for social integration between the two communities, which would decrease biased Cultural Perceptions. Having their kids enrolled in school can also provide parents with space for employment.

- Negative Externalities:

Without Transnational Aid, these recommendations would drain public Education funds. If not administered fairly, and if it overshadows the national educational sector, this program could create envy between local population and refugee population.

Local NGOs 5 – Healthcare

They should continue providing their current medical services. The local NGOs should consider expanding preventive Education and services in terms of diet, exercise, and sexual hygiene.

- Positive Externalities:

This would help keep the refugee population disease-free. Permanent improvements to Lebanon's healthcare infrastructure could decrease negative cultural attitudes resulting from perceptions of favoritism between the two communities. This could potentially increase the refugees' living standard.

- Negative Externalities:

If the government does not receive enough Transnational Aid, healthcare needs could overload the service's existing infrastructure and decrease its overall quality.

Local NGOs 6 – Housing Affordability and Livability

They should increase their budgets for rent subsidies and housing restorations. Work on finding affordable and adequate temporary Housing options. They should continue to seek deals, in coordination with the UNHCR, with owners of vacant buildings or properties that would entail some kind of benefit in exchange for free-of-charge refugee occupancy for a specific time period.

- Positive externalities:

These recommendations would help increase access to affordable shelter and tenure security. There would be less homeless people and less people living in substandard conditions.

Local NGOs 7 – Shielding from Regional and Internal Turmoil

They should build Social Capital and awareness in ways that minimizes intersectorian conflicts. They should explore strategies for discouraging xenophobia and combative international attitudes amongst the population. They should implement social cohesion and integration programs between Lebanese and Syrian refugees, launch awareness campaigns, and increase Education.

- Positive Externalities:

These policies would potentially encourage regional peace and constructive attitudes amongst the population. With a peace of mind, locals can focus on producing social and economic capital.

- Negative Externalities:

Taking passive military or cultural posture poses some vulnerability. Current covert involvement in Syrian civil war could risk provocation of insurgent or state military forces.

Local NGOs 8 – Management of Radicalism

They should use their Islamic identity to promote non-violence and tolerance, through religious classes and communal workshop.

- Positive Externalities:

If these strategies are properly applied, refugees are less likely to be susceptible to extremist brainwashing. By building social interactions and cohesion between host and refugee communities, the latter are less likely to participate in harming the former and their city.

- Negative Externalities:

Unregulated monitoring by the Lebanese authorities, in the name of security, could infringe on refugees' rights. If local NGOs involve themselves in the interpretation of religious doctrine beyond Zakat, they risk diminishing their credibility within the communities they are serving.

Local NGOs 9 – Local Perception of Privation

They should increase awareness campaigns and Education encouraging compassion and tolerance toward refugees.

- Positive Externalities:

This would potentially increased Mutual Identification between host and refugee communities, improve their Cultural Perceptions of each other, and increase Civic Behavior.

- Negative Externalities:

By focusing on their needs and suffering, these strategies could increase perceptions of victimhood amongst the refugee and those assisting them, which can inhibit initiatives for personal and community agency.

Local NGOs 10 – Family Cohesion

They should provide resources and programs that are family oriented. The local NGOs should also consider looking into the marketing benefits of Family Cohesion in their appeal to donors.

- Positive Externalities:

These recommendations could increase social cohesion, Lawfulness, and Mutual Identification.

- Negative Externalities:

While Family Cohesion is generally a good thing, Familism – the structural prioritization of family interests over individual interests - is known to limit Civic Behavior and the development of strong Social Institutions.

Local NGOs 11 – Mutual Identification

They should use Education, awareness campaigns, and workshops to increase appreciation of similarities in lived experience based upon gender, and non-demographic interests. However, engaging alternative sexualities, alternative religious beliefs would almost certainly discredit the Islamic institutions and damage consensus-based social stability.

- Positive Externalities:

This would help increase Social Capital. It would better Cultural Perceptions between Lebanese and Syrian communities.

- Negative Externalities:

Initiatives encouraging non-familial identification risk disrupting the conservative social values of the city's residents, which are based upon family hierarchy.

Local NGOs 12 – Cultural Perceptions

They should establish a dialogue between the two communities about their negative historical experiences. They should seek commonalities and focus on them through communal workshops, capacity building initiatives, and activities for kids.

- Positive Externalities:

These strategies would increase social cohesion. They could potentially lead to the reconciliation of deep intercultural wounds.

- Negative Externalities:

Probing too deep into one another's perceptions could expose irreconcilable differences about politics and history, which would exacerbate current tensions.

Local NGOs 13 – Social Institutions

They should try to collaborate or work independently to create opportunities for social interactions. From this can grow well-rooted Social Institutions. These institutions should also encourage and identify mutual enjoyment and utility in social activities.

- Positive Externalities:

This would potentially increase social interaction and cohesion between the Lebanese and Syrians

- Negative Externalities:

These strategies, if not implemented with social caution, could raise certain risks of creating or increasing social and communal friction.

Local NGOs 14 – Perceptions of Need

Getting noticed by transnational organizations, Islamic or Western is a challenge for small local NGOs. Reliance on sophisticated imagery and videos are principle tools for getting attention of western audiences. Because of the enormous costs, competition, and political implication of getting media coverage, campaigns may most affectively utilize social media platforms. This strategy would employ viral videos, compelling imagery, and blogging prowess on popular Western platforms like Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, Vimeo, etc. These campaigns are useful in getting the attention of Western audiences and can both directly raise funds from them and inspire them to apply political pressure to get the attention of policy makers. In their initiatives to get the attention of transnational Islamic organizations, NGOs must increase personal outreach and develop a strategy that emphasizes their Islamic activity and the Islamic worthiness of their beneficiaries. They need to develop their Islamic brands including logos, names, outreach personas, who would appeal to the average Muslim to contribute their personal Zakat to their cause.

- Positive Externalities:

This can increase the local NGOs' regional and global exposure. It would help diversify their Aid Sources and potentially increase their funding. This would potentially better the refugees' living conditions, through more food or rent subsidies. It would allow the local NGOs to widen the Variety of Aid Types they provide to include more social integration and capacity building programs for Lebanese and Syrians in Saida.

- Negative Externalities:

Images fetishizing Syrian refugees suffering could be off-putting to populations where aid is sourced. Also, oversaturation can cause topical fatigue in certain populations. In general, there is a threshold after which PR efforts targeting Islamic or Western donor populations become inversely effective. That is to say, certain Islamic language may be effective toward Islamic populations, where it would be off-

putting to Western populations. Toward qualifying for Western aid, NGOs may market themselves as politically, religiously neutral, which would dissuade some Islamic organizations.

Local NGOs 15 – Number of Source Options and Quantity of Aid

The local NGOs should increase the financial transparency of their work. They should publish expenditure reports that detail the source, quality, and quantity of their funding intake, organizational and operational costs, the percentage of donations directed towards refugee needs, the different sectors and programs into which these donations are channeled

- Positive Externalities:

These recommendations would help diversify the local NGOs' Aid Sources and potentially increase their funding. This would potentially better the refugees' living conditions, and it would allow the local NGOs to widen the Variety of Aid Types they provide.

- Negative Externalities:

Increasing transparency requires implementing standards and protocols, which include a lot of paperwork and documentation. This could potentially become a time consuming process that decreases the NGOs' operational efficiency and flexibility.

Local NGOs 16 – Variety of Aid Types

They should expand they scope of aid services based on need surveys filled out by refugees, and on the NGO representatives' own observations and assessments of their needs.

- Positive Externalities:

This would eventually decrease their economic dependency on humanitarian aid assistance. This study's fieldwork has already described Syrians as boasting a distinct work ethic: they work with a great attitude for long hours. Beyond these traits, there are likely to be specific cultural mentalities that could translate to innovate businesses, products and services. In this way, liberalizing the participation of refugees in the local Economy could lead to innovations and synergies that could permanently bolster local and national economies.

- Negative Externalities:

Unregulated fiscal inflows could pose security risks. Also, increased economic stake could incentivize the refugees to stay in Lebanon permanently, which could be unpalatable for the host Infrastructure and political stability. These strategies, if not regulated properly, could increase the economic competition for local businesses.

Local NGOs 17 – Coordination

They should increase their financial and operational transparency. They should network and devote more resources to their appeal. The local NGOs should pressure the municipality and central government to assist them in coordinating with international organizations.

- Positive Externalities:

This could potentially increased Aid Sources, Quantity of Aid, credibility of NGOs, participation of local activists, and internal organizations. It could also help inspire more intentionality behind their operations.

- Negative Externalities:

This could make their work more time consuming, less efficient, and it could risk decreasing their operational flexibility.

6. Conclusion

The variables examined in this study characterize a moment in Saida's continually evolving operating environment. The Syrian conflict remains highly volatile, and is unlikely to be resolved in the near future. The circumstance demands constant evaluation of the regional security environment, internal socioeconomic and political dynamics, and the needs distinct to Lebanon's Syrian refugee community.

The political factions loosely comprising the "Lebanese government" remain preoccupied by security considerations, and by a desire to maintain a system of cantonized economic activity. These impulses are enshrined within a sectarian sociopolitical framework, a system characterized by confessional bias, political clientelism, and familism. Correlates of this entrenched system include a weak central government, a weak military, a crippled national budget, restrictive economic policies, widespread corruption, and enduring sectarian social biases.

Such characteristics amount to very difficult conditions for Syrian refugees and those organizations seeking to help them. Luckily, two external forces maintain an essential interest in helping Lebanon's Syrian refugees: secular Western aid organizations and faith-based Islamic aid organizations. These organizations have the ability to raise huge amounts of fiscal capital, drawing resources from massive donor pools formed by taxpayers, philanthropists, and philo-Islamists. Taxpayer resources are expressed through state-level contributions to international organizations, or direct state-to-state aid. Individual philanthropist resources are usually expressed through direct contributions to international organizations. Philo-Islamist resources are expressed through direct contributions to mosques and transnational Islamic organizations.

The Syrian refugees of Saida are particularly lucky to benefit from a minority group of Lebanese, working in local NGOs, who have assumed a critical role as intermediaries between Islamic humanitarian aid organizations and the distribution of faith-sourced aid. This channel for the acquisition and distribution of Islamic aid echoes similar channels for Western-sourced aid. However, despite some overlapping functions, the Islamic and Western aid channels have distinct foundational ideologies, distinct institutional organizations, and distinct operational tactics.

This study examined those distinctions, using the empirical evidence of Saida's case study toward identifying the advantages and limitations of the Western and Islamic aid models. This approach enabled the study to make concrete recommendations to the institutions presiding over Saida's refugee circumstance, particularly with respect to developing more sophisticated strategies for the acquisition of international aid. On account of the homogeneity of Saida's Sunni Muslim population, recommended strategies borrow from both Western and Islamic aid models.

Furthermore, this study built a descriptive framework for the variables of the Lebanese operating environment. This method entailed descriptive measurements of each variable's dimensions, a useful if unmathematical tool for mapping dimensional interrelations. This framework empowered the study to make specific, dynamic recommendations based upon shifting circumstances and specific policy changes.

In different contexts, urban planners might constitute one of the principal resources at the disposal of actors overseeing refugee management. In many Western countries, for example, urban planners (theoretically) have a crucial integrated role in the process of formalizing emergency response plans to sudden population upheavals. In Lebanon's Operating Environment, the role of planners remains generally weak and dispersed, especially in responding to humanitarian crises. Their work is mostly confined to producing assessment and progress report that are sanctioned either by international organizations (the UNHCR, Oxfam, Mercy Corp), large local NGOs (Caritas, Hariri Foundation, Makhzoumi Foundation), or governmental institutions (Ministry of Public Health, Education, Finance). If urban planners were a conceivable resource for the Lebanese context,

they would have featured amongst other critical variables in the analytic section, Variables of the Operating Environment. However, the traditional role of planners exists underneath the auspices of big-funding, government-coordinated projects. The infrastructural, social, and economic consequence of such projects generally mandates government involvement – particularly in place where the government is accountable to the public. The tragedy of Saida's operating environment is this: Due to state indigence, the only large-scale projects likely to mount will involve powerful corporate interests. Yet large-scale corporations, staring at the bottom line, have generally shown a disregard for the infrastructural and socioeconomic wellness of the environment, evidenced by their spurning of urban planners. The social capital that exists right now in Lebanon, regrettably, is neither the quantity nor the variety to reverse this trend.

The findings of this study challenge the assumptions of existing paradigms: First, this study challenges the prevailing notion that Western aid organizations are singularly or uniquely equipped to provide transnational assistance to populations in need. Faith-based organizations have a tremendous ability to mobilize fiscal and social capital – and perhaps do so without the bureaucratic constraints and ideological dryness of Western aid models.

Second, this study challenges the idea that responding to refugee crises is a zero-sum game characterized by a mission to provide only basic services and resources to temporary, economically isolated refugee communities. This study instead promotes a liberalized notion of social justice and refugee potential, measuring refugee populations by their potential social capital. Immigration has long been considered in economic terms as potentially fruitful, owing to the formulation of cosmopolitan environments and their generation of economically valuable cultural synergies. It is archaic to relegate refugee populations to the socioeconomic margins, when they stand to offer tremendous capital to a host nation's economic and social life.

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